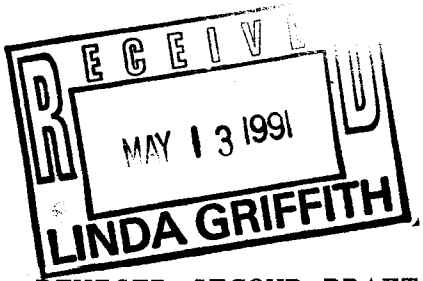
NIKITA
(working title)

Written by

Alexandra Seros



REVISED SECOND DRAFT

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FADE IN OVER CREDITS:

EXT. NYC - LATE NIGHT

A pigeon, fluorescent-necked, soars over Manhattan, where the water meets the land, as if it were just an eye and a wing.

A shorebird, it flies quickly through the trees, never touching a branch, seeing everything at once, patrolling --

Old piers, chain link, ghettos, and in the distance -- a lighted bridge and the city's ancient neon: "Hot Coffee, Sandwiches, Cold Beer."

Billboards. Double-deckers. Metal rolltops, closed for the night.

A seafood restaurant. "Steaks and Chops."

Korean lettering over empty, slatted stalls, a produce market by day.

Flowers. Pristine. Glassed-in. Gladiolas and daisies in the window. Wilting with presence. And --

The pigeon soars past a jewelry store window, pocket watches, antique jewelry -- the old and the new -- and then dives, landing on the roof of a two-story building. Looks down at --

Four street punks, slouching up the quiet boulevard. Leather jackets, military boots, ripped jeans, the sullen shuffle of already-bitter youth. One of them drags a fifth body, limp but not yet dead.

They pass the jewelry store, looking absently into a window at velvet-covered pedestals, deco platinum and old gold. They stop next door --

AT LOCKED ROLLTOP

ANTHONY, a timid-looking boy, twenties, fumbles uncomfortably with a bunch of keys. Huddled next to him in the cold, are RICO, a silver-toothed hood, and his girl friend, ALEXANDRA, twenty, androgynous, full-mouthed, wearing a headset, and totally drugged out.

From behind Anthony, Rico nods to ZAP, a semi-conscious muscle-man, long-haired and shirtless. Zap catches Rico's eye and smashes the lock with the butt of an Uzi. The sound careens through the night air. Everyone freezes:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANTHONY
(more pissed off than scared, low-voiced)
I've got the fucking keys, Zap.

ZAP
(confused, childlike, dumb, mirroring Anthony's whisper)
I zapped it!

ANTHONY
(trying to push Zap out of the way)
Yeah, I see that. It's all you know how to do.

ALEXANDRA
(softly to Rico and humming to her music, out of it)
I need it.

RICO
(watching Anthony, trying to keep warm, eerie smile)
Don't worry, you're going to get it.

Alexandra looks up, jumpy and --

Next to the pigeon on the roof, the neon above flashes alternately, on and off, "Farmacia, Drugs, Farmacia, Drugs."

INT. BEDROOM - SAME TIME

Silhouetted behind the flashing neon, a WOMAN, sixties, sits up in bed, hair in plastic rollers, clutching a People Magazine. Sounds of a BREAK-IN are clear downstairs.

Her HUSBAND, bit older, clumsily wields a bolt action shotgun, while he punches out 911 on the phone.

WIFE (WOMAN)
(staring blankly at the gun)
Let the police take care of it.
You're going to wind up dead.

CONTINUED:

HUSBAND
(scared, but resolved)
They can't get away with this.
(to the police, over the phone)
Yeah. The East Drive Pharmacy. Right. Get here as fast as you can.

DOWNSTAIRS

Door to the pharmacy flies open. Anthony, Rico, Zap and Alexandra spill inside. Zap drops the overdosed body on the speckled linoleum floor.

BEHIND COUNTER

Anthony and Rico immediately go to work, riffling the pharmacy's wooden drawers for whatever drugs they can find.

Attracted instead to the sunglass display, Zap slams his weapon down on a counter. Tries on different styles. Checks himself in the mirror.

Rico bends down and --

FROM BENEATH COUNTER

Checks on Alexandra, blank stare on her face. Headset still intact, she sits on the floor, feet propped up. Quiet.

ALEXANDRA
(looks bad, beginning a sweat)
I need it bad.

Rico stands up, jumps over the counter, in a rush:

RICO
Anthony! Hurry up. What the fuck's taking so long?!

Rico tears a drawer out of the wall. Dumps it. Nothing.

Zap tries on another pair of sunglasses. Checks himself out.

And suddenly the lights pop on. The owner from upstairs appears at a side entrance. Awkward. His bolt action pointing at nothing in particular.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Rico palms two guns, low, behind his back.

Anthony doesn't move.

OWNER (HUSBAND)
(points his rifle timidly)
What do you assholes want?

RICO
(smiling, evil)
Tony! Is this your old man?

OWNER
(looks around the room, really frightened, questioning)
Anthony?

ANTHONY
(same timidity as his father)
Dad?

OWNER
(looking at Zap)
It's not you, Anthony...

Zap postures at the old man. Smiling. Overdoing it.

ANTHONY
(to his father, shaking with fear)
We need a fix.

Anthony's father stares at his son in disbelief. In the b.g., Rico is relentless:

RICO
(adrenalin taking over)
Going to kill your kid?

The Owner looks around his drugstore, defocussed and just --

OUTSIDE

The police SCREECH to a halt. TWO CARS, rubies flashing, a squad of armed officers.

INSIDE

Rico sees the police. Reacts. FIRES. Big BLAST. Hits Anthony's father.

Police move in, SHOOTING to kill.

Rico KEEPS FIRING, two-fisted, both barrels, an urban cowboy. Hits one cop.

ANTHONY
(hands over his head)
Stop! This is my place!!

ANOTHER ANGLE

THROUGH the glass door a second cop pulls on a leather mask. Readies a high-powered rifle.

ON SCENE

Zap jumps onto a counter, screaming. Trashing the pharmacy with an ax. Blows out wiring. SPARKS. Chaos. Rico loves the destruction. Grabs a SHOTGUN. FIRES at will. SHOOTS out a WINDOW.

OUTSIDE

A third COP hesitates. Sits down behind his car. Steadies his gun. A Zen move.

INSIDE

Alexandra sits still, frozen stare, headset in place.

Rico slides himself along the floor behind a counter, toward her, SHOTGUN in hand. Quick move. Suddenly he's up and FIRING. Hits the masked --

COP

who is thrown dead on the ground by the BLAST. At the same time, SHOOTS out what's left of the store's GLASS facade. Then, sudden quiet.

Anthony crouches in a corner, hands still covering his head. Cowers.

INSIDE

Zap continues gutting the pharmacy with his ax.

CONTINUED:

RICO
(angry laughter)
Is that it? Come on. Is that all you've got? Let's have it!!!

OUTSIDE

The Zen Cop mounts the infrared camera and gun. Expert.

INFRARED CAMERA POV

FOCUSES ON Rico, who FIRES from his PISTOL at random, shooting just to do it. Unaware of the camera's seeing eye; its clear light.

RICO
(screaming up at Zap)
Make it good, Zap! Make it really good!

ZAP
(tearing his way through the drugstore shelves)
It's gonna be good, Rico!

And, as the CAMERA FINDS Rico. Cop FIRES. A perfect shot.

RICO
(last words)
It's gonna be good...

As he slides down a back wall. Slumped. Finally dead. And:

HAND

reaches out, retrieving his dropped gun.

INFRARED

refocuses on Zap. One skill SHOT. Zap is thrown backward, off the countertop.

COP

moves inside. Cautious. Wary. Slow. Holds his weapon rigid in one hand, lets it lead.

CONTINUED:

Carries a hi-tech flashlight in the other.

Anthony moves INTO VIEW, hands up, unarmed:

ANTHONY
(a pleading surrender)
This is my place. I live here.
This is my place.

And the Cop, on edge, looking for retribution, LETS LOOSE, killing Anthony in cold blood. Then, he continues moving through the aftermath. Trains his light on each bloodied body as he looks for life.

Alexandra waits, oblivious, in another world, until the Cop finds her. He leans down, looks into her dilated eyes. Puts down his gun. Gently removes her headset:

ALEXANDRA
(finally turns to
him, sad-faced, drug
dependent)
Did you find any?

COP
(a quiet)
No.

And Alexandra puts Rico's gun to his throat. One quick move. Cop doesn't budge. Complete surprise. Scared. Still breathing hard from the fight. Unmoved, Alexandra cocks the gun:

ALEXANDRA
(slight smile)
Sing me a song.

The Cop tries for some sound, even a whistle, but his throat catches with fear.

ALEXANDRA
(no emotion)
That's not very good...

A moment. Their eyes engage and she BLOWS him away.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. WOMAN'S PRISON - DAY

Sound of leather BILLIES BASHING the cell GRATES. Unnecessary. Typical. Two guards pull Alexandra from her cell. Rough. Unsympathetic. SQUEALS and SCREAMS from other PRISONERS as the guards strut through the restricted corridor.

INT. PRISON OFFICE - SAME TIME

Alexandra is seated facing a DETECTIVE. She's quietly rebellious. Defiant.

DETECTIVE
(cold)
Full name.

Alexandra tries to talk, but her throat catches. Parched sound. Detective leans in, moves closer to her, in some way to help her push out the words. And --

Slaps her hard across the face. Quick move.

ALEXANDRA
(almost sliding off her chair)
Alex.
(sarcastically)
Thanks.

DETECTIVE
(sadistic smile)
Last name.

ALEXANDRA
(pursing her full lips)
Big mouth. Want to check it out?

Detective slaps her again. Harder.

DETECTIVE
(outraged)
Do you know why you're here? Big mouth?

Alexandra shakes her head, "No."

DETECTIVE
(waving a manila folder at her)
I have a report you killed <u>three</u> police officers.

ALEXANDRA
(really unsure)
I just remember one... bad singer.
(looks up at her oppressor)
Do you know how to sing?

Detective whacks her so hard she flies off her chair. As she pulls herself back up:

CONTINUED:

DETECTIVE
You're not worth wasting my time.
(hands her a form)
Fill this out. You've got five minutes.

ALEXANDRA
(innocently)
Pencil?

Detective pushes a pencil across the desk. Looks at the guards, as though some progress has perhaps been made and --

Alexandra picks up the pencil, carefully, looks at it a moment, switches her hold on it and, like a knife, she thrusts it through the back of the Detective's hand. One lean move. Wily. Fast and spare.

ALEXANDRA
(screaming, bad-voiced)
'The itsy bitsy spider went up the water spout. Down came the rain and washed the spider out. Out came the sun and dried up all the rain. And the itsy bitsy spider went up the spout again!'

And as the guards grab a tight hold of her, we --

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. COURTROOM - DAYS LATER

Stark. Only a jury sits, waiting for their verdict to be read. The JUDGE, receding blond hair, late forties, is handed a note from the bailiff.

Sitting at the defense table, Alexandra taps her foot neurotically to a tune in her head. No contact with her lawyer.

Just behind the table, six armed guards watch her every move.

In the b.g., a man, thirties, suit and tie, stands just inside the double doorway in the quasi-empty room. Watches Alexandra's behavior. Takes notes.

Jury files in. Real straight. Jury of peers. As they take their seats, foreman hands the verdict to the bailiff, who takes it to the Judge.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JUDGE
(reading)
'In the case of The People versus Alexandra Devlin, the jury finds you guilty as charged.'

Alexandra's foot moves faster. She begins a slight sweat above her lip.

JUDGE (O.S.)
You are hereby sentenced to die in the gas chamber. You will be remanded to the Federal Penitentiary in Pleasanton, California, where you will remain until your sentence is carried out.

A moment, while Alexandra takes it all in. Then, in a rage and panic, she stands up, turns over the table in front of her. Innate strength.

ALEXANDRA
(screaming)
Motherfuckers!

She makes an extraordinary leap over the table. Tries to take off, scanning the room for help, still screaming:

ALEXANDRA
Motherfuckers!!!

The guards have trouble tackling her, finally grabbing hold of her arms and legs. She almost gets free. Tremendous, raw strength. Animal adrenalin. Facile. Amazing quickness.

The man taking notes, stops, watches her, curious. A slight smile on his face.

The guards finally manage to handcuff her, dragging her out of the courtroom --

INT. HALLWAY - SAME TIME

Down a long, just-polished corridor. Alexandra screams AD LIB, kicking her guards. Fierce. Wild. Nonstop. And we --

CUT TO:

INT. PRISON - SOME TIME LATER

Silence. An eerie, hi-tech cell. Strange. Solitary. Alexandra sits cuffed to her chair, covered only by a white hospital smock. An orderly flips a metal briefcase onto an empty table.

Punches out a computer code. SNAPS open the metal case.

INSIDE

A syringe and two ampules of clear liquid. Orderly's hand prepares the dose.

Note taker from court arrives. Again watches Alexandra's behavior.

ALEXANDRA
(crying softly, childhood memory)
Let's just wait for my mom. She'll be here any minute. She told me to wait right here.

Orderly taps at the glass syringe. Noncommittal.

ALEXANDRA
(nostalgia growing)
Please don't take me. I want to wait for my mother... Five more minutes. She's picking me up right here... I know she is...

And, as the orderly plunges a full dose of liquid into a vein:

ALEXANDRA
(pleading for her life)
Mommy!!! Mommy!!!

A bright, white light wipes across the room and we --

CUT TO:

BARE, FLUORESCENT BULB - NEXT DAY

hangs over...

INT. WHITE-TILED ROOM

empty except for a hospital bed, a table, two chairs, a sink and several empty bookshelves.

ALEXANDRA

wakes suddenly. Adjusts her eyes to the light. Tries to focus. Sits up. Looks around. Her clothes and military boots have been saved and left on a chair for her. At the far end of the room:

HUMAN EYE

looks at her through a peep-hole in the door. And then:

THROUGH DOOR

Still another man, thirties, immediately seductive, moves toward the table. BOB, thirties, sits down. Opens a fat manila folder and looks up at Alexandra. They share a glance, a moment, then:

BOB
(smiles)
Hello.

Alexandra stares back. Not moving. Clutches her gown. Confused. Unsure. Afraid to speak.

Bob immediately understands. Picks up the wooden table, walks with it over to Alexandra's bedside and puts it down right in front of her. Goes back for his chair. Brings it over to the table and sits down, right across from his new patient. Face-to-face.

BOB
(softly)
What's your name?

ALEXANDRA
(momentary trust)
Alex.

BOB
(great smile)
That's a beautiful name. Where'd you get it?

ALEXANDRA
(stunned, then like a flash, she remembers, still can't smile)
From my grandmother.

The kindness makes Alexandra cry. Bob clears his throat. Discomfort. Tries to remain professional. Distanced.

CONTINUED:

ALEXANDRA
(broken down)
Where the fuck am I? Is this heaven?

BOB
(nervous)
No, but... it could turn out to be.

Bob opens his file. Hands Alexandra a series of photos. She stares at the first one. Passes it. No recognition.

BLACK AND WHITE (8X10'S)

A funeral. People mourning. Scattered faces. All ages.

ALEXANDRA

peruses the photos. Doesn't seem to connect with any of them.

BOB (O.S.)
It's your funeral. There's your father. You don't recognize him?

Alexandra shakes her head "no." Amazed.

ALEXANDRA
(honest compliment)
He looks good.
(pause)
You sure that's him?

BOB
(continuing soft-voiced)
You died Friday at 10:06 P.M. The prison doctor confirmed your suicide. Overdose from tranquilizers. You're buried in the new section of Oakmont, row 43, plot 78.

ALEXANDRA
(suddenly recognizing someone, sadness)
Billy?
(starting to cry again)
That's my friend, Billy... I recognize him.

CONTINUED:

BOB
(nods uncomfortably, still continuing)
You're special, Alex. Strong. Fast. Unpredictable. Young enough to start over. Except for your instincts. Those are yours. Keep them.
(long pause)
I work, let's say, for the government... and...
(again, the slight smile)
... we've decided to give you a chance. A real chance.

ALEXANDRA
(holding back tears, takes this in)
What do I do... for this chance?

BOB
(convincing, up)
Learn. Learn to work. Read, walk, talk, smile and even fight.

ALEXANDRA
(a deep exhaustion)
What for?

BOB
(cryptic)
Shall we say, to do your duty?

ALEXANDRA
(stares at Bob)
What if I don't want to?

BOB
(looks down at the funeral photos, sadly)
Row 43, plot 78.

ALEXANDRA
(tears choking her words)
Can I sleep on it... before I make up my mind?

BOB
(long stare)
I'll check back in an hour.

CONTINUED:

Alexandra watches Bob leave. Scared, she doesn't move until the sound of his FOOTSTEPS are gone even from the outside corridor. Then, she pulls the white U.S.-issue sheet over her slim body. An escape into sleep.

BOB'S EYE POV THROUGH DOORWAY PEEPHOLE - ROOM - ONE HOUR LATER

At the far end, Alexandra's still asleep.

ANGLE ON BOB

Bob smiles. A certain, unusual fondness for this one. Bob opens the door, walks over to the bed and --

From behind the door, Alexandra smashes a chair over Bob's head. A temporary knockout.

ALEXANDRA
(screaming hostility)
Motherfucker!

Dressed again, in her original clothes, she throws the chair across the room. Always angry, she walks over to Bob and kicks him hard in the ribs.

INT. HALLWAY - ALEXANDRA

knocks open the door to her room, holding Bob hostage in front of her, his Walther PK pressed into his jugular.

ALEXANDRA
(tough)
Which way's out?

BOB
(nervous)
Straight ahead.

The corridor winds its way to an open:

INT. WAREHOUSE/WORKSPACE

Huge. 10,000 sq. feet. Overhead lights. Windows that look out onto more underground space. A shadow world of work. Old walls. Modern installation. Very hi-tech. People mill around. Work at various computer terminals. Eat. Exercise. Lots of activity.

CONTINUED:

Alexandra drags Bob through the space, gun still poking at his carotid. She looks around at everything, confused, scared, vastly outnumbered:

ALEXANDRA
Who're all these weirdos?

BOB
Employees.
(hands up, to everyone)
Nobody move. Everything's okay.

ALEXANDRA
(faking strength)
Nothing's okay. Everything's fucked!

She jabs at Bob's neck with his gun. Continues moving them. Fast. Toward an ancient, metal elevator door. Looks hard at Bob, who's beginning a slight sweat:

ALEXANDRA
(looking for controls)
Open the door!

BOB
(relatively calm)
I can't.

ALEXANDRA
(half crazy)
Tell them to do it!

A handful of employees, men and women in suits and sport coats, in shape, move in on Alexandra:

BOB
They won't.

ALEXANDRA
(desperate)
I'll blow your fucking brains out.

Employees get into crouch positions, cock their weapons:

BOB
(more frustrated than frightened)
They still won't.
(turns slightly within her hold)
It's not loaded.

CONTINUED:

Takes her by surprise. Fast move. Pulls her off his back. Now keeps himself at a new distance. Employees freeze. Guns still drawn. Bob waves everyone to a standstill with one hand.

And to Alexandra, not sure what to do with her yet:

BOB
(rubbing his sore neck)
Calm down! Cool it!

She backs off, outnumbered, giving up. Holds the gun across her chest with two hands. Begins to cry. Tremendous sadness. Big wound.

BOB
(to the employees, softly)
Get back to your desks.

Slowly, they uncock their guns, holster them, move back into the cavernous room.

And just behind Bob, in the b.g., Alexandra turns the gun around, letting it move into her open mouth. Bob sees the gesture, runs at her just after she fires an empty chamber. Grabs the gun, knocking her down:

BOB
Rule one. Never load the first chamber.

Then, he aims and FIRES a real BLAST straight through her thigh. She screams in hard pain. Rolls over on her back and then forward again. Animal terror.

BOB
(wiping his forehead, pissed off at himself)
That oughta hold you for a while.

INT. CORRIDOR - NEXT DAY

Human eye looks through the peephole, into:

SAME WHITE ROOM

Door opens cautiously. Bob appears on the other side. Careful coming in this time.

CONTINUED:

Alexandra sits on her bed, as before, except her leg is newly bandaged. In her white cotton underwear, she seems slightly more vulnerable. Bob sits at the table, in a suit, that same slight smile on his face, but distanced.

BOB
(arms folded defensively)
Made up your mind?

Alexandra nods a resigned "yes."

BOB
(more of a smile)
Good.
(opens a folder, pulls out a form)
Fill this out.

Alexandra nods another resigned "yes."

ALEXANDRA
(so sad-faced)
What if I don't make it?

BOB
(sure of her)
You'll make it.

INT. WAREHOUSE UNDERGROUND - FEW DAYS LATER

Electronics area. Dark except for the tiny pools of halogen light. Rows of computer terminals. Several employees. Intent. Hard workers. Professional.

Alexandra sits at one of the banks with her Asian INSTRUCTOR and her own computer.

COMPUTER INSTRUCTOR
(wants to begin at the beginning)
We'll start off with a simple program. This is just like a typewriter keyboard. Letters. Numbers...

Bored already. Alexandra grabs a piece of equipment. Wants to play with it. Instructor tries to get her to wait. She's intent on her new toy:

CONTINUED:

COMPUTER INSTRUCTOR
Okay, then. This is a mouse. You use it to write, say, or draw with. It's got little rollers underneath to make it move. Roll it on the pad.

Alexandra bangs the mouse on its pad, very rough, trying to get it to work.

COMPUTER INSTRUCTOR
(soft-voiced, hand over hers)
Gently. Roll it gently.

She tries again. Bit gentler. Never taking her eyes off the image on screen. Instructor watches her. Takes a new interest.

COMPUTER INSTRUCTOR
(pointing to the image on screen)
Move the arrow up here... all the way up...

Alexandra obeys. Gets the hang of it immediately.

COMPUTER INSTRUCTOR
Okay. Now click on this little square. Click twice.

She does it. Onscreen, the image changes. A cracked laugh eeks out of her, but she remains stone-faced:

ALEXANDRA
(enjoying herself, but without energy)
Again.

INT. WAREHOUSE - ANOTHER DAY

Same ancient building. Always well lighted. And still another area. Indoor shooting range. Target lanes. ENDLESS sound of GUNSHOTS.

Alexandra shuffles onto the range. No expression. Goes directly to a table covered with guns. Another INSTRUCTOR hands out the weapons:

FIREARMS INSTRUCTOR
(to Alexandra)
These are the firearms we use here. This is a Beretta nine millimeter automatic. Fires twenty shots, max.

CONTINUED:

Loads it, hands it to her expertly, carefully:

FIREARMS INSTRUCTOR
(condescending)
Always. Barrel toward the target.

Alexandra takes the gun, stares at it, popping her gum convulsively. Lets the pistol fall to her side like a dangling set of car keys:

FIREARMS INSTRUCTOR
(oblivious that his pupil's walked away)
Before I teach you the correct stance, get to know your tool.

Alexandra FIRES SEVEN SHOTS in quick succession. Takes a moment. Tilts her head to check her accuracy.

At the same time, another shooter, rifle in hand, leans out of his lane to catch a look at this new expert.

And in the b.g., the Instructor eyes the target. Amazed, as Alexandra punches the target return button to double check her skill level.

As the target moves electronically toward the Instructor, she walks back to return her weapon. Uninterested in her incredible accuracy, continuing to pop her gum incessantly.

Instructor stares at the perfectly shot-up paper target. Speechless. In awe.

FIREARMS INSTRUCTOR
(wide-eyed)
You've used one before...

ALEXANDRA
(already checking out a semi-automatic on the table, again, no emotion)
Never on paper.

INT. INDOOR GYM - ANOTHER DAY

Fully-equipped gym. Free weights. Treadmills. Bikes. Rowing machines. Gymnastic pads. Horses and rings. Everything in use.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

In progress, a karate class. Black belts. Amazing grace. INSTRUCTOR executes a perfect move. Alexandra sits at the side of the group, watching. Still sad-faced. Still without energy.

At a distance, Bob watches her through a glass panel.

KARATE INSTRUCTOR
(finishing with a male student)
More relaxed next time.

Snapping his fingers at Alexandra, as she looks up:

ALEXANDRA
(completely uninterested)
Can't. My leg hurts.

KARATE INSTRUCTOR
That's okay. We'll just do a reflex exercise.

Alexandra hugs her plastic water bottle. Doesn't move.

KARATE INSTRUCTOR
It'll be easy.

Alexandra thinks about it for a moment. Takes out her gum, sticking it to the top of her bottle. Stands up. Same shuffle over to the karate master.

KARATE INSTRUCTOR
Get ready.

Instructor goes through a quick kate. Very fast. Intimidating. Alexandra mirrors his kate with her own, simple boxing stance. Fists up.

In the b.g., Bob watches the confrontation. Serious.

KARATE INSTRUCTOR
(staring straight-faced at her)
I've taken up my guard. Now you must try to hit my face.

In an incredible move, Alexandra hits the master right in the face, knocking him backward on the mat, off balance.

Bob sees it. Smiles to himself. Shakes his head at Alexandra's unbelievable ability.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLOCK SOUNDS. BUZZER indicating class is over. Bit dazed, the Instructor nods to Alexandra. She nods back, grabs her stuff and takes off. Karate master watches her go. A first.

KARATE INSTRUCTOR
(claps his hands at a new group)
Next class.

Alexandra takes off out of the glassed-in gymnasium, a round-shouldered shuffle, oblivious to her impact.

INT. ALEXANDRA'S ROOM - SAME

Neat. Clean. In perfect order. A computer and desk, bed neatly made. Everything in place. Alexandra strays in, halfheartedly, drops her backpack and a BUZZER sounds immediately. She turns back around, heading out again. Moves down a --

DORM-LIKE CORRIDOR

and back through the --

COMPUTER AREA

where work is nonstop.

INT. CIRCULAR METAL STAIRWELL - MOMENTS LATER

Walks up a grated stairway and into a baroque apartment. Dark wood. Elegance.

By a window, AMANDA, a rare, faded beauty in her sixties, reads a book. Looks absently out her window. Reflects quietly. Sheer femininity.

Alexandra watches her a moment. Doesn't get her attention by her presence. Stands awkwardly waiting. Finally, she lets out a soft whistle.

Amanda looks up immediately. Checks out the window. Nothing. Turns, sees her new pupil. Looks at Alexandra, as if there's no hope, then at her tiny antique watch. Quick smile and --

AMANDA
Do you know how to read?

Alexandra nods a simple "Yes."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AMANDA
(satisfied by the answer)
What can you do with your hands or your mouth?

Alexandra looks at her hands. Turns them over. Stares at her palms. Blank. Chews her gum out of nervousness. Gets an idea. Looks at Amanda as if she's performing and blows an enormous bubble, popping it all over her face.

AMANDA
(not impressed, gestures toward a fully-equipped Deco vanity)
Sit down.

Alexandra looks around, scraping the gum off her face. Drops down into the vanity chair and stares at herself in a mirror. Sad-faced, as always.

At the mirror, three glossy views of Alexandra are taped in an even row. Prison-like photos. Stares at the pictures of herself. Disapproves.

Amanda grabs a full-leaded crystal ashtray, moving over to Alexandra. As she places the ashtray in front of her...

AMANDA
(nicely, but firmly)
Get rid of the gum.

Alexandra obeys immediately. Takes the gum out of her mouth, sticks it momentarily to any remainder on her cheeks, and then drops it into the gorgeous glass.

AMANDA
You don't look like much now, but with a little caring...
(takes a wig off a Styrofoam model)
... we might be able to unfold your second childhood.

Drops the wig onto Alexandra's head. They both evaluate the difference in the mirror. Amanda pulls off Alexandra's heavy jacket.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AMANDA
(slight smile)
Do you like it?

Alexandra stares at herself in silence. No emotion. Just that primitive glare.

AMANDA
(continuing as if nothing is unusual here)
Can you give me a definition of grace?

ALEXANDRA
(still staring at the wig)
I'd say something shitty.

AMANDA
Okay, so smile when you don't know what to say. That won't make you any smarter...
(sighs at the work ahead)
... but at least it'll be more pleasant for those looking at you.

Alexandra continues staring at herself. Incredulousness mixed with her constant sadness.

AMANDA
(gently brushing her finger across Alexandra's cheek)
Allow yourself to be taken over by the faint fragility... which will make your face so beautiful. Give me a smile, Alexandra.
(tries to define what a smile is)
A smile is surface sweetness. Gentleness. Almost a mood.

Alexandra tries very hard to smile, the corners of her mouth turning down. She tilts her head. Stares at herself. Tries some more. Looks even sadder. Difficult for her. The pain of something new. Poignant.

AMANDA
(big smile for the attempt)
Shall we fix the wig?

INT. BALLET CLASS - ANOTHER DAY

BALLET INSTRUCTOR, in perfect Baryshnikov form, taps at the highly-polished hardwood floor with a master's stick.

Group of students, all in dancewear, Capezio shoes, hold in third position. Ready. In the b.g., Alexandra is IN VIEW. Same as the others except for her military jacket and khaki shorts.

BALLET INSTRUCTOR
One, two, three, four...

AT BAR

A row of feet, one after the other, position themselves heel first onto the bar. Out of nowhere, a loud thud, as Alexandra lands her feet, boots and all, onto the end of the bar.

Instructor eyeballs the shoes and stops. Waits appropriately, obviously, giving his new pupil a chance to adjust. And --

BALLET INSTRUCTOR
One, two, three, four...

Alexandra again holds the position in her untied boots. Instructor notes the behavior. Stops again. Waits, as Alexandra looks at her feet. Finally, she bends down, while the class pauses, pulling off her shoes and socks.

Instructor starts a third count and then continues with the class. Moves in and out of the rows of men and women, correcting each of them one by one.

Smiles at Alexandra's primitive, but agile style. Obvious she's trying hard.

INT. UNDERGROUND - CAFETERIA - BIT LATER

Ultra-modern. Immaculate. Best of post-modern style. Wall of clocks line the ceiling area. Large, industrial-type. Various time zones. Sound of SILVER and CONVERSATION in the b.g.

Alexandra sits at a table alone. Picks at her food, as Bob sits down to join her. Obviously charged by his presence, she leans into her food, stabbing at it angrily.

BOB
(smiling, trying to relax)
How's it going?

CONTINUED:

ALEXANDRA
(pissed off)
I wish it had gone.

BOB
(smiles)
A sense of humor, that's a good start.

Alexandra looks off. Sees another girl, younger than herself, maybe 16. Angry. Smoking. Alone. A newer recruit. Bob notes the interest and the similarity.

BOB
New friend?

ALEXANDRA
(takes out her gum)
I get along with my mouse.
(looks up at Bob)
When do we go out for a drink?

BOB
(surprised, suddenly serious)
Not yet.

ALEXANDRA
(sarcastic)
No rest in this factory?

BOB
(trying to joke)
Never.
(referring to her wig)
It suits you.

ALEXANDRA
(hurt by the rejection)
I'm going to be twenty-one next week. Can't I have a leave... even if you have me followed?

Bob shakes his head, "No." Doesn't trust her. Alexandra pushes her chair away from the table. Gets up without finishing and takes off out of the cafeteria. Bob watches her go, but does nothing to stop her.

INT. ALEXANDRA'S ROOM - BIT LATER

Stares at herself in her own mirror.

CONTINUED:

In the b.g., faintly, PUCCINI'S "O Mio Babbino Caro" and slowly, haltingly, she pulls off her wig. Underneath, her chopped-up hair is a mess. She kicks at her vanity. Hard. Cries to herself. Hostile tears. A new rebellion.

EXT. TARGET RANGE - NEXT DAY

A metal table full of various pieces of a semi-automatic weapon. Alexandra stands at the table, a stopwatch readied just behind her.

FIREARMS INSTRUCTOR
(pushing the watch)
Go!

Alexandra grabs the barrel assembly. Shoots in the top slide assembly. Snaps on the collet assembly, which contacts the main frame, hammer assembly and bullet primer.

Instructor smiles big at his prized student. Checks the watch. Record time. And --

Just as fast, Alexandra stops, breaks down a moment, then, tears the gun back apart, tosses the pieces everywhere and takes off out of the range area.

Other recruits are confused. Instructor watches her go. Startled. Disappointed. Stops the watch. Resets it and, to the group, gestures an AD-LIBBED "Next."

INT. UNDERGROUND - CAFETERIA - NEXT DAY

Amanda and Alexandra sit at an area of the cafeteria made up to simulate a restaurant. Employees act as waiters. Table is set elegantly. Flowers. Antique linen cloth and napkins. Each are served baby quail with tiny potatoes, steamed vegetables and a bottle of cabernet. A lesson in eating.

AMANDA
(showing Alexandra what to do)
Don't look down at your plate while you cut the quail. Keep your head up... so you can listen, make conversation.

CONTINUED:

Alexandra, her wig a little skewed, tries to emulate Amanda. She exaggerates her posture, trying to cut her food without looking at it. Impossible. Parts of the tiny quail slide around on her plate. A few vegetables are pushed off, onto the table. Nervous, Alexandra picks them up with her fingers to put them back.

Amanda works with ease, beginning to eat. Alexandra watches her, getting frustrated, having difficulty even holding her knife and fork properly.

Amanda takes a sip of wine. Alexandra tries to hold the wineglass by its stem, but it feels top heavy. As she tries to adjust her hold, she spills a drop of the grape-colored wine on the spotless, white tablecloth. Realizes. Puts the glass down. Too hard. Spills a bit more out of the top of the glass.

Amanda looks over at her student. Patient. Smiles. And --

Suddenly a wave of discomfort hits Alexandra. She picks up her quail and slides all the meat off the bones with her hands. Sticks the moist pieces into her mouth. Wipes her fingers on the tablecloth for emphasis. Mashes the vegetables in both hands, puree oozing out between her fingers. Picks up the bottle of wine and takes a swig, letting wine spill over her throat. Takes a palmful of chocolate mousse and stuffs it into her mouth. Gets up from the table, knocking her chair over and struts out. Great gait. Place a mess.

INT. COMPUTERS - NEXT DAY

Alexandra sits down with her Computer Instructor.

COMPUTER INSTRUCTOR
Got a new program. You'll have fun with it.

Without response, Alexandra hands him a gift.

ALEXANDRA
Present!

Pleased, surprised, he looks around the room. Stares at the small box:

COMPUTER INSTRUCTOR
I guess I should open it.

CONTINUED:

Unties the ribbon, while Alexandra watches him. Steady gaze. Suddenly, a live mouse climbs out of the box. The Instructor drops the box, jumps up and moves back, away from his terminal as --

ALEXANDRA
(screaming out her poem)
M-I-C-K-E-Y-M-O-U-S-E!!! Mickey Mouse. Mickey Mouse. Forever let us hold your banner high. High. High!!!

INT. INDOOR GYM - ANOTHER DAY

Karate Instructor snaps his fingers AT us.

Sitting on mats, sandwiched between two muscled men, Alexandra slouches, cross-legged, looking up at the master, expressionless.

Gestures for Alexandra to join him on the mat. She looks from side to side, making sure he means her.

FROM BEHIND GLASS PARTITION

Bob watches the next encounter. Serious. Stern.

GYM FLOOR

Finally, Alexandra gets up from her tangle of legs and before she's ready, the Instructor throws her onto her back. Unfair. Retribution for her earlier win.

In the b.g., one of the other students shakes his head at Alexandra's quick defeat.

Pinned under the Instructor and pissed off, Alexandra bites his ear. Hard. Instructor screams. Crawls away from her and, as he does so, Alexandra jumps up, kicking him in the stomach. While his students move to his defense, protecting him physically:

Alexandra improvises her own dance.

BEHIND GLASS PARTITION

Bob can't help but smile at Alexandra's rebellion, as:

GYM FLOOR

She moves to a dissonant inner rhythm. Puppet-like, fragile, angry and creative.

INT. DIRECTOR'S OFFICE - NEXT MORNING

Dark. Mahogany. Typically masculine. Agency director, KAUFMAN, greyed, lined, a tough sixties, reads a report. Typically bureaucratic. Bob watches him. Silent. Concerned.

In the b.g., Kaufman's assistant, youngish, driven, periodically looks up at Bob. Then, he diverts his gaze back down at a stack of reports to be organized and filed.

KAUFMAN
(intimidating)
In three months she's screwed everything up.
(looks at Bob, mean)
Lost your touch?

BOB
She has potential.

KAUFMAN
Potential?
(thinking Bob's pretentious)
What kind of potential? For scaring, kicking and biting instructors; for throwing food, for incompletes on her tests?
(facetious)
That kind of potential?

BOB
(nervous, at a loss)
Good agents take time to train. Five, maybe even six years... and in her case --

KAUFMAN
(closing the file, wrapping it up)
-- Oh, come one. I'll give you two weeks. I want <u>some</u> improvement during that time. Otherwise, she's out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BOB
What do you mean, 'out'? Are you afraid to say execute? Because there's no 'out' for her.

KAUFMAN
Give me a break, Bob. She doesn't work, I'll blow her away myself. That clear enough?

Bob continues staring at Kaufman. A hard choice. And we --

CUT TO:

TV SCREEN

covered with watercolors. Childlike daisy chains and random streaks of red, yellow and green paint frame the 19" set. On TV, Audrey Hepburn and Cary Grant are chased by a one-armed George Kennedy in the final moments of Hitchcock's Charade...

And PULLING BACK INTO --

ALEXANDRA'S ROOM

She's covered every wall with the same red, yellow and green paint. No longer neat and tidy, she's trashed the entire place. "NO VISITORS" is handwritten in black paint across the width of the door.

In her underwear, she hangs over her bed, glued to the movie, eating obsessively from a bag of cheesy chips.

Without warning, Bob walks in, a rolled-up picture in his palm. Looks around at the destruction. Disapproving, but holds the rest in. Tacks what turns out to be a Degas dance poster on one wall, over a portion of the paint scrall. Pretty pink dancers. Alexandra stops eating, sort of frozen, watching him.

BOB
You've made progress, expecially in dance... and in art. But the rest of the subjects...
(looks down at Alexandra, painful to say it)
... nothing, zero, nul, nada.

Bob makes a zero with his forefinger and thumb. Turns out the lights:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BOB
I'll be right back.

Alexandra waits, the cheese chips still in her hand, unclear, unsure what's next. Looks up at the Degas poster. And as --

Bob walks back in, he carries a beautifully homemade chocolate cake with twenty-one lighted candles. A blazing plea. Long moment while Alexandra tries to take it all in.

ALEXANDRA
(almost in tears)
Will you sing for me?

BOB
(hesitates, then in a whisper, but singing)
'Happy birthday to you. Happy birthday to you. Happy birthday...
(looks at Alexandra, just short of longing)
Alex-an-dra, happy birthday to you.'
(catches himself staring at her)
Blow them out.

Alexandra is immediately softened. Looks at her cake on fire and blows out every candle in one breath. Touched.

Bob takes out a row of candles. Pulls a switchblade out of his sportcoat pocket. SNAPS it open. Uses it to cut a piece of cake. Hands it to Alexandra who eats it from her hands, carefully. With grace.

BOB
(still in a whisper, but dead serious)
Kaufman wants immediate improvement, Alex. No delays. They've given us the weekend. If by then you don't start conforming, I can't help you.

Bob gets up, pauses a moment at Alexandra's clothes and finally picks up her boots, shorts and jacket and carries them out with him. As he closes her paint-spattered door, she looks after him, absently. Saddens, like a criticized child, puts the rest of her cake down and --

ON T.V.

HEPBURN (V.O.)
Well, Adam, Carl, Alex, whatever your name is, I do!

Grant and Hepburn hold on a long kiss. Technicolor love. And then, too, on screen, "The End."

INT. AMANDA'S APARTMENT - NEXT DAY

Alexandra walks up the circular stairway. New sweater and shorts. On her feet, new shoes. Gorgeous, leather, Italian loafers. Understated. Clean. Argyle socks.

At the top, Alexandra sits down at the vanity. Flips a switch. Lights the lights around the mirror. Stares at herself. Blankly, but with that same ancient sadness in her face. And --

From behind a moveable bookcase Amanda enters, novel in her arms, hair down, looking almost Alexandra's age for a moment. Stares at her pupil. Looks around the room for others. Obviously wasn't a scheduled class. Alexandra looks up at her as Amanda moves closer.

AMANDA
(unexpected)
Are you looking at my hands? They used to be smooth. They give me away now.

ALEXANDRA
(searching)
Did you go through this?

Amanda shoots a knowing smile at Alexandra. Puts a lipstick down in front of her. Waits while Alexandra turns the shiny gold tube over in her fingers. She opens it, winds it up and down and finally begins to apply the color.

Amanda leans into the mirror's view, head-to-head with Alexandra. Talks softly to her as she puts on the makeup.

AMANDA
(smiling, watching her)
You have to look for your poet within and that great sanity, that sun, the feminine power.

And as the pale pink color is applied and reapplied we --

JUMP TIME TO:

AMANDA'S APARTMENT - THREE YEARS LATER

And Alexandra's transformed into a gorgeous ingenue before our eyes. She applies makeup with ease. Her hair is cut short. In style. She has a polish now. Moves with new energy. A different woman.

AMANDA
(grabbing a dress from a closet for Alexandra)
I don't believe it! You're not ready yet?!

ALEXANDRA
Amanda, relax. I'll make it.

AMANDA
It's five to. I don't want you to be late for your dinner lesson.

ALEXANDRA
(perfect French accent)
Se faire attendre c'est se faire desirer.

AMANDA
(surprised, impressed)
Where'd you learn that?

ALEXANDRA
On my computer.

AMANDA
(tearing a dress off its hanger)
Put this on.

ALEXANDRA
And speaking of my computer, I've got a bit more work --

AMANDA
(practically putting the dress on Alexandra herself)
-- no way --

ALEXANDRA
-- just ten more minutes.

INT. COMPUTER AREA - FEW MINUTES LATER

Alexandra works fast in front of a computer terminal. Sure of herself. Extremely expert.

ON MONITOR

A four column list of ten-digit numbers fills the screen.

ALEXANDRA

makes a numerical correction. Looks at the screen. Still not right. Frowns. Then, as she punches a key, satisfied:

ALEXANDRA
(to herself)
That's it!

As she rests a moment, happy with the result, she looks elegant. Simple black velvet sheath and string of pearls. Bob moves in behind the screen. Watches her a bit, then --

BOB
(can't help but smile at this prodigy)
You look beautiful.

Alexandra doesn't look up. Continues typing, letting out a faint smile.

ALEXANDRA
Are we dining?

BOB
You still have dinner lessons after three years? What're you doing wrong -- putting your feet on the table?

ALEXANDRA
(coy, but sharp)
Tonight's special.

BOB
Why, is it your birthday?

ALEXANDRA
(never looking up, but with a smile)
Hey, he didn't forget.

INT. EATING AREA - AMANDA

Puts finishing touches on an elegant table. Candlelight. Sterling service. Walks around the table, checking it, making it perfect.

CONTINUED:

Bob follows Alexandra to the table. She sits down immediately. Bob remains standing.

ALEXANDRA
(a little bored, the usual routine)
Amanda, we have a guest tonight.

BOB
(putting on an overcoat)
I thought we'd have dinner...
(unpredictably)
out.

Alexandra is stunned. Takes a moment. Confused. Tries to regain her composure. Remains seated. Takes her time. Still off-guard.

Bob stands in front of the ancient steel elevator. Pulls out a special i.d. card in order to leave. Waits. Sure of himself, as always. Then, pushes a button.

Alexandra looks up at Amanda, who hands her a jacket and a pair of suede gloves.

AMANDA
(a reserved affection)
Happy birthday.

ALEXANDRA
(appreciative, trusting)
Shall I go?

Amanda nods her head "Yes," as the metal door quietly opens up in the b.g. And --

ELEVATOR - MOMENTS LATER

Opens up again, onto a narrow cement passageway. Bob leads Alexandra through it while --

ON SURVEILLANCE MONITOR

Their exit is being both recorded and watched from behind glass by a company guard.

BOB

Waves to the guard, who waves back. And the final door to the outside is electronically opened for them.

EXT. TURN-OF-THE-CENTURY FACADE (WASHINGTON, D.C.)

Alexandra moves outside hesitantly, Bob still slightly ahead of her. She looks back and up at the doorway, wide-eyed, reading for the first time --

MILITARY LIBRARY

And inscribed in Latin and English underneath, "The Truth Shall Set You Free."

ALEXANDRA

is exhilarated to be outside. Bob offers her his arm, she hesitates, then takes it, holding on loosely. A moment, then Bob grabs her hand spontaneously and wraps her forearm tightly around his. Walks Alexandra to a cab that has pulled up for them. Alexandra takes a long look at the watery streets and then gets into the car. Bob pulls his overcoat a bit closer to his body and leans into the cab after her.

INT. ELEGANT RESTAURANT (STILL D.C.)

Rene Lalique opaque glass doors. Baroque ceilinged. Gold leaf. Antique chandeliers. Blood-red carpeted entry.

A WAITER seats Alexandra and Bob.

WAITER
(to Bob)
The usual, sir?

Bob nods his head "Yes" slightly, never taking his eyes off Alexandra.

BOB
(smiling)
You can put your bag down.

Alexandra stops looking around, realizes her momentary lapse, brief smile as she takes off her coat.

BOB
(removing the potted flowers from the center of the table)
Watch this.

Bob lifts up a portion of the tablecloth, pulling a beautifully wrapped gift out from underneath, prearranged.

CONTINUED:

BOB
(handing it to Alexandra)
Magic!

Alexandra grabs her gift. Hugs it tight. Starts to tear it open.

BOB
(suddenly serious, seeing the Waiter)
Wait.

Alexandra holds off, as the Waiter uncorks a bottle of Dom Perignon. Pours. A taste. Pours both glasses and --

BOB
(toasting, again a seriousness)
To your future.

ALEXANDRA
(impatient)
Now?

Bob lets out a full smile, nodding his head "Yes." Alexandra tears the wrapping off, exposing a gorgeous wooden box. She opens it like a child, happier than she's ever been. And --

INSIDE

an enormous silver handgun and six bullets, all encased in lavender velveteen.

AT TABLE

Alexandra looks at Bob, confused, beginning to get scared.

BOB
(taking the moment, no waste)
It's loaded. Eight titanium bullets plus an extra cartridge.

ALEXANDRA
(sad)
I don't get it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BOB
(deadened, monotone, relentless pace)
There are three people behind you. A woman, and two men in suits. A V.I.P. and his bodyguard. You have to kill the V.I.P. Use two bullets, minimum. Then, go to the men's room. At the last stall, there's a small window your size. It opens onto a courtyard. A corridor leads to the street. A car's...
(checks his watch)
already waiting for you there.

Alexandra's listening intently, but on the verge of tears. The shock is almost too much for her.

BOB
You've got three minutes.
(smiles naturally, pats his mouth with a napkin)
Please wait until I leave.

Pushes his chair out, gets up to leave, smiling as he goes.

Alexandra's suddenly alone, in tears. Can't believe it. Sits temporarily frozen a moment. Then, looks down at the walnut box on her dinner plate and begins pulling off her black suede birthday gloves. Reopens the box. Hides the extra cartridge in her bra. Pulls out the gun, looks around inconspicuously, quickly pulls off the safety, cocks it, stands up and --

As she turns, just behind her, a man, deep in conversation with a seductive woman and their body-guard, who relaxes a bit at the table.

Before anyone can react, Alexandra aims and FIRES TWO BLASTS, killing, as ordered. Direct hits.

The VIP is hit in the head and heart. He slumps forward, pressed tight over his appetizer.

Alexandra pivots, holding her gun at arm's length.

The bodyguard draws his own .22, but Alexandra SNIPES him in the head. Too quick.

The woman cries, shaking, gulping air, trying to plead for her life.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

People in the restaurant scream in fear. Hide under their tables. Run for cover. Total chaos.

Alexandra pivots once more and takes off, barefooted, toward the men's room. Passes her own shoes she left on the polished wood floor.

Through heavy revolving doors, several guards rush in, automatic weapons in hand, passing the dead bodies, moving fast down the center aisle.

AT MEN'S ROOM

Alexandra, breathing hard, moves to the last stall. Just above, a glass window. Relieved, she reaches up to open it and just behind the glass facade --

It's bricked in. No opening. Nothing. Alexandra is stunned. Inert. She breaks down, pounding the brick with her small, but muscled arms. Years of hurt and anger resurfacing. And just --

OUTSIDE MEN'S ROOM

A row of black wall phones. More polished wood and gilt. Two guards hoist their weapons, ready to attack.

MEN'S ROOM

Alexandra hears the GUARDS moving just ouside the door. Squeezes behind the last stall, to an open space, walking quickly down a --

STORAGE HALL

past shelves of food, linens and restaurant equipment and INTO --

RESTAURANT KITCHEN

Alexandra walks, gun at her side, fast, but inconspicuously as she can through the white-tiled, chrome and steel kitchen. All at once SHOTS fly PAST her. She ducks, FIRING BACK several rounds, as she keeps moving, looking desperately for protection finally behind a --

STAINLESS STEEL COUNTER

Alexandra stays low, blocking GUNSHOT SPRAY and lethal pieces of ceramic tile with her hands.

JUST OUTSIDE KITCHEN

More guards with automatic weapons wait as backup, while in --

KITCHEN

Three GUARDS hit the chrome counter with a fusillade BLAST. And from --

BEHIND STEEL COUNTER

Alexandra rolls over onto her stomach, FIRING a perfect hit into one Guard's heart. A SECOND SHOT, CRACKS off a lethal piece of EXPLODING TILE, hitting another Guard in the head. Second deadly hit. Alexandra rolls back. Huddles against an industrial Wolf stove, while in --

KITCHEN

Still ANOTHER BLAST of MACHINE GUN FIRE is concentrated at her. Boxes of dried pasta are shot open, flying over Alexandra's head. Pots are blasted apart, food gushes onto the floor. Alexandra pulls the extra cartridge out of her dress. Pushes it into the heavy gun. Waits. Then, stands up, IN VIEW and FIRES BACK. Wounds a third Guard. Drops down again, OUT OF VIEW, behind the counter. SILENCE. Waits.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Guard lies on the floor, checking his wound. And, just on the other side of --

STEEL COUNTER

Alexandra pulls out her clip. Lays the gun down. Grabs onto the stove's oven door. Moves the length of the space in a squat. From --

KITCHEN

Alexandra can hear the GUARD who's hit call for backup.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WOUNDED GUARD (O.S.)
(from his position on the floor)
Jose!!

And from --

JUST OUTSIDE KITCHEN

JOSE, an enormous hitman, plunges a rocket of steel into a launcher. Slides in crisply. METAL against METAL. Ready for anything. Jose checks the kitchen. Quick. Head only. Ducks back out. Then, he checks again.

BEHIND STEEL COUNTER

Alexandra listens in the silence. Afraid. BREATHING GETS LOUDER. Resilience building. And --

IN KITCHEN

Jose makes his move. SHOOTS a ROCKET of FIRE out his launcher, as --

ALEXANDRA

dives into a well-like chute, her only way out, the ball of flame whirling just behind her. Barely out of reach. And --

OUTSIDE

The streets are wet. Rain-slicked. Quiet. Suddenly out of a load of garbage, Alexandra crawls to momentary safety. Miserable, angry, she looks around, and bare-footed, her pearls fluorescent under the night sky, she takes off running fast, as hard as she can, until she's a small point in the rain.

MILITARY LIBRARY - TWENTY MINUTES LATER

Two SECURITY-types talk AD LIB, as Alexandra runs past their outdoor booth.

SECURITY GUARD
(taking off after her)
Hey! Stop! Stop!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Way ahead, Alexandra doesn't stop until she runs into the glass booth at the elevator. Slams the glass hard with the palms of her hands.

MAN inside the booth is surprised. No recognition. Immediately picks up a phone, as the --

Security Guard catches up with her. Alexandra kicks him in the face with a bare foot. One move. Fast.

MAN IN BOOTH
(scared, on the phone)
We've got a problem out here.

ALEXANDRA
(pleading, screaming, banging on the glass)
Open the door, asshole!

Man in the booth nods, wide-eyed into the phone and, the steel door slides open.

INSIDE

Alexandra walks hard toward her room, rain soaked, wiped out, pissed off, shaking with rage.

AT HER ROOM

She kicks open the door and --

INSIDE

A more sophisticated place. Red velvet Louis XIV chair, postmodern torchere, antique bed, Pratesi duvet. And her Degas poster is now under glass.

Bob sits on a leather Eames, reading the paper.

ALEXANDRA
(in tears)
Bob, the window was bricked in.
It was completely bricked in!

BOB
(looking up at her)
Of course it was.

Without a beat, Alexandra knocks Bob off her chair with one hand. Dives on him:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALEXANDRA
(pulling his hair)
You son of a bitch! Asshole!
Motherfucker!

BOB
(covering his head)
Stop it, Alexandra!
(struggling with her)
It's over! You get out tomorrow!
(moving on top of her)
You get out tomorrow! You... get ... out... tomorrow!!!

Finally hearing him. She stops fighting. Bob stares down at her. Close. A moment, then he picks himself up off of her body. Moves across the room. Hits her desk with a hard fist, aroused, out of control:

BOB
Just calm down, goddamnit!
(pacing)
We have to do this sort of exercise, before letting so-called agents out of here. These are the rules. We can't let anyone go, until we're one hundred precent sure of that human being. This was your last test.
(softening)
Now I'm <u>two</u> hundred percent sure of you.

Alexandra sits up, still on the floor. Faces her bed, head down, hugging her legs to herself:

BOB
(taking a long look at her)
You've done a good job, Alexandra.
Tonight and all these years.
You've been my best student.
(unrequited)
I'll miss you.

Bob moves to the door. Opens it. Looks back at Alexandra.

Hesitant. She gets up. Moves over to her mentor. And in the doorway, Alexandra kisses him softly. Catches him off guard. A first. Long moment, then:

CONTINUED:

BOB
(letting go)
I've waited so long for this moment.

ALEXANDRA
(matter-of-fact)
It'll never happen again.

And as she slowly closes her door in Bob's face, he tries to linger, at a loss.

IN CORRIDOR

Bob leans against the wall. Shaken. Cries silent tears, as he remains unsteady, shaky, standing on the black and creme tiled floor.

INT. KAUFMAN'S OFFICE - NEXT DAY

Kaufman sits at his desk, reviewing Alexandra's file. Bob and Alex stand, facing him. Waiting. Finally, impatient, Bob sits down.

KAUFMAN
What category of operation is she ready for?

BOB
S1.

KAUFMAN
(pursing his lips)
As ambitious as ever.

Bob doesn't respond. Alexandra moves to take a seat:

KAUFMAN
(without looking at her)
Don't sit down.

Alexandra remains standing, a roll of personal belongings in her arms.

Kaufman stamps his seal onto a finished document, signs it and closes Alexandra's folder. Cold. Finally looks up at Bob:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KAUFMAN
(mean-spirited)
Six months set-up time. No more.
I want her for September.
(to Alexandra,
sadistic)
I can't stand you. I'd have let
you die, so don't make any mistakes.
You won't be warned. Is that clear?

Alexandra nods her head, "yes." Doesn't budge. No expression. Doesn't like Kaufman either.

INT. TARGET RANGE - BIT LATER

Firearms instructor lays several guns on a table. Bob and Alexandra look at each of them. Alexandra immediately picks up a small, pearl-handled Beretta:

ALEXANDRA
(to Bob)
How many do I take?

BOB
(all business, as if
the night before
had never happened)
Three at the most.

INT. BOB'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Spare. Bookcases line one wall. Metal and glass supports hold a black granite desktop in place. A forties porthole sees out, onto the street one floor below.

Alexandra examines a few of Bob's books. Bob picks up an envelope, the only paperwork on his desk.

BOB
You are Claudia Doran. Greek for
'the stranger.' Is it okay?

Alexandra nods her head, "yes," everything almost too much for her.

Bob slits an envelope with a sterling letter opener. Reads to himself first.

CONTINUED:

BOB
Chicago? I hate Chicago.
(looking at Alexandra)
No way. Too gray for you.

Alexandra smiles to herself. Likes the overprotection. Bob looks everywhere for a map:

BOB
(finding one in his agenda, unfolding it)
Where do you want to live?

Alexandra stares at the map. Has no idea.

BOB
(pointing to various cities)
New York is out. Your past is there. Too risky. New Orleans? Food's good. Dallas. Trouble with Dallas, it's Texas.

Suddenly, Alexandra points to the ocean.

BOB
The ocean? You want to live on a boat?

ALEXANDRA
(points to a spot)
No. Here.

Bob looks at the map.

BOB
Okay Venice. Venice, California. Perfect. Claudia of the sea.
(leaving his office)
Be right back.

Alexandra watches him go. Wide-eyed. Looks back down at the map.

INT. UNDERGROUND - 30 MINUTES LATER

Bob hands Alexandra a series of documents. In the b.g., just outside the doorway, sounds of TRAFFIC, a HORN in the distance, SIRENS, STREET NOISE. Alexandra strains to see outside.

CONTINUED:

BOB
(clear)
You're a nurse at St. John's Hospital. L.A. Santa Monica, actually. You're paid at Wells Fargo Bank, also Santa Monica.
(handing her an envelope)
Passport, driver's license and a little bonus... to help you get started. Your code name is...
(showing her a card)
'Mickey.'

ALEXANDRA
(brief smile)
As in Mickey Mouse?

BOB
(nodding, "yes")
As in Mickey Mouse.

BOB
(once again, serious)
Good luck.

ALEXANDRA
(shaking, strangled words)
I'm scared.

BOB
(soft, completely taken over by her)
The worst is over.

Alexandra hesitates a moment. Looks up at Bob. Long stare. One last bit of reassurance. Then, she turns, taking off down the street, out the international courtyard and on her own --

EXT. D.C. STREETS - ALEXANDRA

struggles, on foot, down the street with one leather duffel and a matching shoulder bag. Both packed full. CARS HONK at her intermittently. She isn't sure which side of the street to move onto. As she half stumbles toward a taxi stand, we --

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY (MALIBU) - CAB

speeds up the coast. Passes old Santa Monica Spanish styles, modern stucco experiments and L.A. fiction.

INT. CAB - ALEXANDRA

stares out the window, looking for views of the water, as they pop in and out from between garages and tile roofs.

DRIVER checks his rearview, watching Alexandra. Trying to make eye contact.

Alexandra doesn't move her glance, a faint smile on her face.

DRIVER
Do you have an address?

ALEXANDRA
(out of her reverie)
No. Yes. I mean, I'm just trying to remember. It's right after this curve...

Silence again, as Alexandra looks back at the pristine coastline. Clutches her smaller bag tight, like a child.

DRIVER
(making his move)
Because if you don't, I mean we've been driving along the beach now for thirty-six minutes and, all I'm saying is, if you don't have a place to stay, I live by the water --

ALEXANDRA
(finally trains her gaze on this guy)
-- Stop! It's here!

DRIVER
Are you sure? I mean, I didn't mean nothing by --

ALEXANDRA
-- How much?

EXT. PCH/CAB - ALEXANDRA

pays the Driver, and takes off toward the beach, hauling her bags over her shoulders.

CONTINUED:

As the cab fishtails on a U:

Alexandra moves onto the sand. Sounds of GULL-SHRIEKS and WATER curling toward shore. In the distance, a fisherman casts his line, otherwise the beach is empty.

Alexandra drops her bags onto the sand. Takes off her clothes and improvises into the water. A lazy gull picks her up in his side view.

INT. APARTMENT - NEXT DAY

Place is a mess. Tiny. Completely empty, but still filthy.

Alexandra and a too-perfectly groomed REALTOR move through the once chic bungalow.

Living room is pockmarked with wallpaper. Floor covered in spotted mocha carpet. Only a miniature refrigerator sits open in the kitchen area. And a royal blue leatherette breakfast nook has been built into a wall.

Alexandra stares up at a strip of Italianate molding. The Realtor stares at Alexandra. Outside, the distant sound of WAVES. Routine, constant.

REALTOR
(double meaning)
There are a few other places I'd like to show you.

As Alexandra walks from room to room, through the dust and grease:

ALEXANDRA
(too quick for this guy)
This one is perfect!
(more meaning)
Perfect!

INT. SUPERMARKET - NIGHT

Aisles full of produce. Rows of tomatoes, lettuce, carrots, oranges, apples, boxes of strawberries.

Alexandra, face flecked with paint, pushes an empty cart looking at the food, but unsure about what to buy. Like a fresh ex-con, overwhelmed by the choices.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Passes cheese, packaged meat, wines, bottles of carbonated drinks. Cart still empty.

At the canned goods section, she sees a woman, about her age, pull off a couple of cans of ravioli. As she leaves the area, Alexandra races in after her, grabbing an armload of the stuff.

Now running, trying to keep up with this woman, Alexandra follows her to a refrigerated section. The woman chooses one pint of yogurt. Alexandra waits, chewing her gum nervously, then moves in after her, pulling dozens of yogurt cartons off the freezer shelf.

Banging into an aisle, Alexandra makes it to the frozen foods section just in time to see the woman choose two TV dinners. Alexandra tosses the dinners into an already overloaded cart.

INT. CHECKSTAND - ALEXANDRA

smashes her cart into the stand. Tosses cans of ravioli onto the conveyor. Piles of stuff. Nonstop. Male checker, LEE, late twenties, sweet smile, watches her, amused. Patient.

LEE
(funny guy)
Are you in a hurry?

Alexandra stops tossing food a moment, realizing the mess she's made on the counter. Starts to laugh. Immediate rapport.

ALEXANDRA
No! No... not at all.

LEE
Good because my register's acting up and the belt's broken. So...

ALEXANDRA
(leaning into him, close)
I've got plenty of time.

LEE
(staring back at her, likes her too)
That's good. Move everything over here and we'll start all over again.

Lee takes a look at the first item, a can of ravioli:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEE
(ringing it up)
Ravioli.
(picks up next item, ringing it up)
Hey, ravioli.

Alexandra laughs. Lee picks out next item:

LEE
(facetious)
I'm slow. I've only been here two days. It's really complicated.

Alexandra hands him another can of ravioli. Playing.

LEE
(looking at the can of pasta)
More ravioli!
(then a doubletake at Alexandra)
Having yourself painted?

Alexandra looks down at her forearms, full of paint. Smiles. Embarrassed.

LEE
(turning over a box of cookies)
No price. Can't be worth more than a buck. Call it a dollar.

Lee rings up a dollar. Alexandra cracks up. Having a great time with this guy. Not the typical career cashier.

ALEXANDRA
(out of the blue)
What time are you through?

LEE
(hesitates)
Six.

ALEXANDRA
(looks down, takes a second)
You want to have dinner tonight?

Lee's taken by surprise. Stares at Alexandra. Doesn't know what to do. Finally:

CONTINUED:

LEE
(ringing up another can of ravioli)
A dollar twenty-nine.

INT. ALEXANDRA'S APARTMENT - THAT EVENING

Alexandra, bit cleaned up, but still casually dressed, puts finishing touches on a makeshift table. Large box covered with a sheet. Candles. Rest of the house is empty, except for a few more boxes, paint cans and wall roller. KNOCK at the door.

Alexandra moves to answer it. Lee leans in. Not sure about this, a few stalks of gladioluses in his hand and a six pack of Beck's tucked under his arm. Looks around at the disorder.

ALEXANDRA
(getting a container for the flowers)
It's not finished.

ALEXANDRA'S LIVING ROOM - BIT LATER

Alexandra and Lee sit on the floor, opposite sides of the little table. Lee tries to enjoy the canned ravioli dinner.

LEE
(slightly uncomfortable)
I'm embarrassed. Usually I do the inviting. I'm confused. I don't know what to say.

ALEXANDRA
(eating as fast as she can)
Never mind. Eat.

LEE
Yeah, sure. Eat.
(smiling)
Great ravioli. Your specialty?

Alexandra nods a fast "Yes."

LEE
(new thought)
Something really funny happened this morning at the market --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Alexandra stops him, shaking her head, "No."

LEE
(turning the ravioli over on his fork)
I know, eat...

Alexandra shoves the last bite into her mouth. Wipes off her face with a paper napkin. Big gesture. Then, crawls toward Lee. Pushes him onto his back...

LEE
(wide-eyed)
Don't start something you can't finish.

ALEXANDRA
Sorry, but I want you.

LEE
(fork still in his hand)
It'll get cold.

On the floor, Alexandra stretches out full, her body flush on top of Lee's. Looks down at him. Suddenly, he pulls her tight. A delicate passion. Moves his hands over Alexandra's shoulders and back. Feels her thighs and ass. Alexandra moves just slightly under his hold. And as Lee undoes her shorts, she opens his fly, sure of this sex to be. And as they move with each other, we --

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. APARTMENT - BIT LATER

Alexandra and Lee sit curled together in a down comforter. Still on the floor.

LEE
So... ah, what do you do, besides buy ravioli?

ALEXANDRA
(joking)
I work for the C.I.A.

LEE
(playing along)
Oh really? Me, too. The market's just a cover. How many guns do you have?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALEXANDRA
(smiling, pretends to think)
Three.

Lee nods his head in recognition. Still playing.

LEE
Three? We each carried two, but my group of guys wasn't very good. We had a great time, as good as you can in Angola...

Alexandra suddenly gets paranoid...

ALEXANDRA
Actually, I'm a nurse. St. John's emergency room.
(taking it off herself)
And what did you do before selling ravioli?

LEE
(deep sigh)
I wanted to build and race boats, but... I get sea sick... so, while I wait for a cure, I'm content to just build them. I'm working on a design now.

ALEXANDRA
(straight)
I like the sea.

She kisses Lee on the mouth and we --

CUT TO:

INT. ALEXANDRA'S APARTMENT - SIX MONTHS LATER

Place is clean. Stark. Lavender white walls. Modern fixtures. Tasteful. Handmade replica of a boat sits prominently on a sideboard. Intricate. Huge book lies open to a detail of a schooner. And always, sound of DISTANT GULL-SHRIEKS and constant THROB of the WAVES just within reach.

Alexandra tosses in bed. Trying not to wake up.

Lee, dressed, ready for work, grabs a pot of brewed coffee. Pours a cupful. Butters a couple pieces of toast, puts it all on a tray and moves over to the bed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Wakes Alexandra up with breakfast in bed. Sweet. Intimate.

LEE
Breakfast is ready!
(sets the tray on Alexandra's lap)
Sleep well?

Alexandra nods, "Yes," beginning to eat immediately. Appetite intact.

LEE
I'm inviting Nick to dinner Saturday night. We might go into business together. Both of us have saved enough money, so that we should be able to set up a company. Nick found a guy who's seriously interested in the catamaran we designed.

ALEXANDRA
(between bites)
Which one?

LEE
The Caraibe.

ALEXANDRA
(quick)
Oh yeah, the one where you forgot to leave room in the kitchen for the refrigerator.

LEE
(going with the joke)
That's what you remember? That's great. Thanks... a lot...

ALEXANDRA
(instantly apologetic)
Sorry. I like the Caraibe.

Lee looks at her peripherally --

ALEXANDRA
(backing off, more serious)
No, I really do!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEE
Yeah, okay. Why don't you invite a friend?

ALEXANDRA
(swallowing, more serious)
Who?

LEE
Someone from work.

ALEXANDRA
(uncomfortable)
There's nobody there, I'm close to, really.

Quickly throws her arms around Lee, kissing him hard, trying to change the subject.

LEE
(smiles, then turning serious)
Claudia, how come you never have anyone over?

Alexandra stops eating. Worried. Trying to think fast.

LEE
(slowly, painfully)
No relatives. No friends. Nobody.

ALEXANDRA
(at a loss)
Because I love only you.

LEE
(big smile, feels good)
If you really mean that, you're in trouble, because another woman said that to me last night.

ALEXANDRA
(instantly upset)
Who?!

LEE
My mother.

Alexandra smashes him in the face with her pillow. Lee pins her arms. Alexandra kicks the air with her legs, trying to get free and --

CONTINUED:

PHONE RINGS, interrupting them. Lee glares at the phone. Lets go of his prisoner and gets up to leave for work.

Alexandra flips over in bed, trying to ignore the PHONE. Keeps RINGING. Finally, she picks up...

ALEXANDRA
(playful)
Helloooo?

VOICE (V.O.)
(on the phone; very matter-of-fact)
Mickey?

ALEXANDRA
(shocked pause)
Yes.

VOICE (V.O.)
(still very stern)
Bel Air Hotel. Bar. One hour.

ALEXANDRA
(hushed)
Um-hmm.

Hangs up. Lee grabs an apple from the refrigerator, pulling on his jacket at the same time...

LEE
(calling from the kitchen)
Who was that?

ALEXANDRA
(quiet lie)
Work. I'm on duty.

INT. HOTEL CORRIDOR - ONE HOUR LATER

Landmark lobby. Twenties Spanish. Old L.A. Alexandra, perfectly punctual, sits in a leather, down-filled French provincial, waiting for contact. Impeccably dressed. Transformed. Darkened demeanor. Waiter approaches for Alexandra's order.

ALEXANDRA
Espresso.

A MAN sits down next to Alexandra. Leans in for a light. As she lights his cigarette...

CONTINUED:

MAN
Basement of the St. James in an hour.

INT. HOTEL BASEMENT - ONE HOUR LATER

Cement corridor filled with laundry and dry cleaning. Ominous. Alexandra walks haltingly down the narrow passage. Cautious. Sunglasses hooked into the top of her suit. Moves toward a pair of swinging doors. Tries to look through them and --

A gun touches the back of her neck.

A MERCENARY holds her up. Huge. Long hair, leather and chrome outfitted. Heavy metal.

MERCENARY
(scary)
Don't move. Legs apart.

ALEXANDRA
(softly)
Mickey.

Immediately drops the gun to his side. Even tries a weak smile...

THUG
Sorry. Go on in.

INT. DRY CLEANING PLANT - BASEMENT - ALEXANDRA

walks in quietly. Two more OPERATIVES stand guard. Automatics poised. Tattoos, leather, scary-looking. A THIRD lounges behind a table, full of surveillance reel to reel stereo equipment. A just-set breakfast tray and bud vase sit within reach.

ALEXANDRA
(glaring at a tattoo on his shoulder)
What do I do?

THIRD OPERATIVE
(handing her a small, folded pile of clothes and a pair of shoes)
Change.

Alexandra takes the clothes, shoes. No emotion. Betrays nothing. Operative points to a guarded door.

INT. ANOTHER ROOM IN BASEMENT - SAME TIME

As Alexandra walks in, seven employees stare at her. Each trying to look blank, peering past the guard at the door. Nervous. Alexandra changes and moves back.

INT. PLANT - MOMENTS LATER

Into the laundry room, dressed as a chambermaid. Lays her own shoes and clothes on a table.

ALEXANDRA
(to the same cop)
Now what?

OPERATIVE
(faintly antagonistic)
Now, we wait.

Two more experts walk in. One takes the spoon from the breakfast tray. Unscrews the handle. Implants a surveillance mic inside. Turns it on. A tiny light blinks red. Slides it back into the spoon handle.

Flips on another mic inside a tin coffee mug.

Still a third mic is placed inside the top of the salt shaker. Tries the salt. Shakes out. All set.

Other expert checks the mic's clarity, testing his own voice AD LIB.

A GUARD with a headset gestures to the Operative at the tray to pick up the relay set of headphones.

GUARD
(mimicking)
Room service. Good morning.
(listens a few moments, then)
Certainly, sir.

From the b.g., V.O., TV NOISE.

Hangs up. Immediately the Operative pours a cup of coffee, adding it to the tray. Glass of orange juice. And tomato. Tureen of milk. One hundred percent bran flakes. Checks everything. Slides a red tulip into the bud vase. Rechecks the tray. Looks at Alexandra...

ALEXANDRA
(standing, dutiful)
Room number?

CONTINUED:

OPERATIVE
(cold, surprising her)
No weapons.

Alexandra looks back at him. Doesn't flinch. Reaches up under her dress, pulling a disposable gun out of her underwear. Still rebellious. Tosses it on the table and...

OPERATIVE
(handing her the perfect tray)
Room 6004.

INT. SIXTH FLOOR CORRIDOR - MINUTE LATER

Alexandra walks the hall, holding the miked tray in front of her. Sound of GLASSWARE CLATTERING together.

At 6004, a corner suite, two thugs stand guard. Alexandra looks up at them, innocently. Holds the tray. Thugs stare at her. Alexandra tries to stand still. Looks straight ahead. No expression. One thug sticks his finger into the dry cereal. Moves it around. Second thug laughs to himself. They each pick up a glass. Check underneath. Stare at Alexandra, who tries to keep the tray still.

She smiles a bit, begins to move inside when one of the bodyguards stops her with a bulging forefinger to her shoulder and --

A door opens. Alexandra moves --

INSIDE ROOM

Eight tough guys and a couple of overdone women watch football on a big screen TV.

Alexandra tries not to look around, putting the tray down in the middle of the coffee table. Tense. Explosive quiet.

ALEXANDRA
(nervy)
Who ordered coffee?

Two of the roughest HOODLUMS stare at her and then look at each other. The first guy intervenes --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HOODLUM
I'll take care of this.

ALEXANDRA
(forcing a thin smile, while he signs the bill)
Thank you.

As she turns to leave, she smashes into a bad copy of a Ming Dynasty umbrella stand with her empty tray and immediately --

All eight men draw their guns. In paranoid unison.

ALEXANDRA
(wanting everybody to calm down, quietly)
I'm... I'm sorry.

As everybody pockets their guns, the second Hoodlum grabs her. A tight hold and out the door --

IN HALLWAY

He pushes Alexandra past the two bodyguards --

THUG
(smiling, almost gently)
You didn't see that, okay?

Alexandra nods a frightened "Yes," as he hands her a bundle of twenties. She looks at the money, reaches up and takes it, smiling graciously. The strong-arm goes back inside and the door slams shut.

Alexandra stares at the closed door. Looks at the two bodyguards. Nothing. Then, another smile as they deadpan her and --

INT. BASEMENT PLANT - MINUTE LATER

Alexandra re-enters, still dressed as a chambermaid. Operative's surveilling room 6004. Headset on. Reel to reel moving.

ALEXANDRA
(stares at the setup a moment)
What do I do now?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OPERATIVE
(without looking at her)
Go home.

TAPE (V.O.)
(via tape recorder, on TV)
... Eagles over the Giants.

ALEXANDRA
(surprised)
Is that it?

Operative nods a, "Yes." Slides her gun to the edge of the table. Alexandra grabs it.

TAPE (V.O.)
(a man's voice)
Cunningham's looking good. He's throwing for over two hundred yards.
(and another voice)
Those bastards in Congress don't come through...
(first voice)
Buffalo's tough this year. Have you seen the Bills-Eagles score, twenty-four to nothing, Bills early in the second quarter? Amazing!
(a moment)
Arms've been taken care of...
(over TV, sound of FOOTBALL FANS)
Holy shit, lookit that! Twenty-four-sixteen, Bills. Eagles've been doing that shit all year.

INT. ALEXANDRA'S BUNGALOW - LATER THAT DAY

Alexandra dances in the door. Loaded with packages. Shopping spree. Excited. Singing, a la Fred Astaire...

ALEXANDRA
'From this moment on, you for me dear
Only two for tea dear, from this moment on.
From this happy day, no more blue songs, only hoop dee do songs.
From this moment on...'

Lee works quietly at his drafting table. Intricate design element for the aft portion of his boat. Deep in thought.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Alexandra throws her arms around his neck. Still singing. Lee smiles, but doesn't move from his work.

Alexandra opens a box. Men's sweater inside. Holds it up to Lee. Wants him to try it. Lee resists. Alexandra forces the sweater over his head.

LEE
(takes a look at her)
Claudia, please. Stop.

ALEXANDRA
Hurry up. Put it on. Winter's coming.

LEE
(muffled, under the sweater)
It's only Spring! What happened to you today?

PHONE RINGS. Alexandra picks up.

INTERCUT as necessary.

ALEXANDRA
(on the phone; still happy, low humming to herself now)
Hello?

CALLER
(quietly)
Claudia?

ALEXANDRA
Yes?

CALLER
It's Bob.

ALEXANDRA
(smiles)
How are you?

In the b.g., Lee stops working. Listens, as inconspicuously as possible...

BOB (CALLER)
Fine. I'm fine. I just wanted to congratulate you on your first job.

CONTINUED:

ALEXANDRA
(looks over at Lee, briefly)
Thanks.

BOB
Still like L.A.?

ALEXANDRA
I like it.
(almost whispering)
There's a guy... I really like, too.

Lee continues working, as if nothing unusual is happening. But now he's listening very carefully, one arm inside his new sweater, the other arm dangling outside.

BOB
(takes a moment, then)
Well, I'm glad you're happy. Hope the next job goes as well --

ALEXANDRA
-- Bob... I want you to come over for dinner. Next Saturday.

Lee lets out a slight smile.

BOB
I'll be there.

INT. ALEXANDRA'S BUNGALOW DOORWAY - ANOTHER EVENING

Lee opens the door for Bob. Can't wait to see this "friend" of Alexandra's.

LEE
(slightly facetious)
Bob. Uncle Bob!!!

BOB
(handing flowers and champagne to Lee)
Hello.

As they move into the apartment...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEE
(holding the flowers)
You shouldn't have...
(looking at the champagne)
This is good. Champagne. It's great.
(awkward)
Claudia'll be right out... I'm really glad to meet... I've never actually met any of her family --

BOB
(quick)
-- You're not missing anything.

Alexandra moves out of the bathroom, sees Bob and runs into his arms. He holds her, almost longingly. A personal moment. Lee feels it. Moves to put the champagne on ice.

INT. LIVING ROOM - BIT LATER

Alexandra, Lee and Bob at dinner. Everything's perfect. Beautifully made. Antipasto, roast lamb, great wine.

BOB
(not surprised)
This is delicious.

Alexandra beams. Remains silent.

BOB
(to Lee, trying not to look at Alexandra too much)
She looks radiant. Must have something to do with you.

LEE
Yeah. My charm's subtle. So subtle, that usually no one even notices it.

Alexandra laughs, kisses Lee on the cheek. Smiles at Bob.

INT. KITCHEN - ALEXANDRA

Prepares the dessert. Pulls out a knife. Expertly. And --

AT TABLE

Lee's curious about Alexandra --

LEE
(pouring champagne)
Tell me what Claudia was like.
When she was little.

Bob's immediately embarrassed. Alexandra moves back in from the kitchen. Sets the dessert down on the table --

ALEXANDRA
(to Bob)
What did he ask?

BOB
He wants to know what kind of little girl you were...

ALEXANDRA
(to Lee, nervous, a slight irritation)
You promised.

LEE
I'm not asking you. I'm asking Uncle Bob, here. See, I can't even ask a question.

ALEXANDRA
Do I ask you questions?

LEE
No, but I wish you would.

ALEXANDRA
(visibly upset)
I love you. That's the best answer there is.

LEE
(slightly embarrassed)
What can I say? Nothing.
(to Bob and then Alex)
Champagne?

Lee serves a bottle of Louis Roederer. Silence.

BOB
(saving Alexandra)
She was a beautiful child. She had long hair, usually pulled back in a ponytail...

CONTINUED:

Alexandra smiles at Bob. Moves closer to Lee, already touched by this story, wishing it were true. Lee's fascinated.

BOB
(smiling)
... her clothes were always starched. Claudia was a good girl at home and she did well in school.
(sudden thought)
I remember one time when she was watching the boys play kickball -- her cousins' team was short one player. They had to choose somebody. Claudia was on the sidelines, all dressed up, just watching, when, reluctantly, the boys asked her to be on their team. She was scared, but excited. And when her turn finally came, Claudia got nervous and missed the ball entirely, but the second time, she kicked it so hard, it went outside the boundary, over a wooden fence and down a hill. The sight of this little girl in ruffles running the bases of a kickball field had everyone up and cheering. She was a big deal that day.

Alexandra's eyes fill with tears.

LEE
(to Alexandra, loving the story)
It's really you. It's exactly as I would've thought.

Alexandra smiles at Lee, then looks back up at Bob, thankfully. Still, an unrequited love.

BOB
(to Lee, serious, change of tone)
Did Claudia tell you what I do?

Alexandra immediately tenses. Unsure of Bob's agenda. Lee shakes his head, "No."

LEE
See, I can't ask her any questions.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BOB
(smiling)
I work in a travel agency. I'm one of the partners.
(pulls out a pair of tickets)
An engagement present.
(loves this game)
Thought you should see the real Venice.

LEE
(picks up the tickets)
I don't know what to say.

Alexandra stares at Bob. Can't believe it. A smile overcomes her face.

BOB
(back to Lee, smiling himself, though inscrutable)
Don't say anything.

EXT. VENICE CANALS - DAY

Power boat glides INTO VIEW. Alexandra and Lee are driven down a canal. Smooth. They sit on top of their seats. Driver up front. Alexandra tries to take pictures. Lee moves into the lens. Holds up a replica of a gondola. Play. Laugh. AD LIB. Lee grabs Alexandra. Kisses her hard, as they fall backward into the white, vinyl seats.

Boat pulls up to its dock. Lee helps Alexandra off. Pretends not to know her. Careful with his miniature gondola. She drags a tourist's supply of baggage with her. Can't stop laughing at Lee's jokes.

INT. VENICE SUITE - MINUTES LATER

Alexandra dances into the room. Carefree. Content. Incredibly happy. Jumps on the bed. A kid's game. Taking off her clothes as she plays. Sings a made-up song. A nonsense song. Sheer happiness.

Lee follows her in. Exhausted. Falls onto the king-size bed. A moment. Then Alexandra lands on top of him.

CONTINUED:

ALEXANDRA
(half-dressed)
I want you.

LEE
(wiped out)
Me, too.

ALEXANDRA
(energy)
I'm thirsty.

LEE
Me, too.

ALEXANDRA
I'm hungry.

LEE
Me, too.

ALEXANDRA
Copy-cat. Undo my skirt.

LEE
Right away.
(reaches for her zipper)
It's undone.

ALEXANDRA
(frenetic)
No. Take it off.

Lee pulls her skirt off, over her feet. In her underwear, Alexandra sits up a moment. Grabs for the phone. Peruses the room service menu and, on the phone --

ALEXANDRA
(trying some Italian)
Buon Giorno. We'd like some prosciutto, e, formag-gio, parm-e-san e, due bottles of acqua minerale. We get thirsty after sex.

Lee registers the comment.

ALEXANDRA
Grazie mille.

She hangs up. Falls back on top of Lee --

CONTINUED:

LEE
What did he say?

ALEXANDRA
(straight-faced)
He said his wife has the same problem.
(looking down at Lee)
Will you sing me a song?

LEE
(smirking)
Forget it. I don't sing. No way. Un uh.

ALEXANDRA
C'mon... for me.

LEE
(long pause, then, western twang)
'Mamma don't let your babies grow up to be cowboys...'

PHONE RINGS suddenly.

LEE
Fuck, saved by the bell.

Alexandra reaches back to pick up, and --

ALEXANDRA
Hello?

CALLER (V.O.)
(over phone)
Mickey?

ALEXANDRA
(disbelief, trying again)
Hello?

CALLER (V.O.)
(over the phone; repeating)
Mickey?

ALEXANDRA
(suddenly sad)
Yes?

CONTINUED:

CALLER (V.O.)
(over the phone)
The bathroom cabinet has a secret compartment.

ALEXANDRA
(trying to maintain, a moment)
Umm. Okay, then make that a white bean salad, instead.

Alexandra hangs up. Dejected and in shock. As Lee holds her at the waist --

ALEXANDRA
(suddenly no energy)
They're out of prosciutto.

LEE
(still happy, at the top of his voice)
Call the management!!!

ALEXANDRA
(in another world)
I need a bath.
(like an order)
Relax and wait for room service.

Alexandra gets up and moves immediately into --

BATHROOM

slamming the door behind her. In --

BEDROOM

Lee barely registers the change. Doesn't move.

IN BATHROOM

Alexandra looks behind the bathroom mirror. Nothing. Opens a wooden cabinet over the toilet. Pulls out a hi-tech headset. Behind that, a rubberized walkie-talkie. Puts the headset on. Flips on the walkie-talkie and --

CONTINUED:

ALEXANDRA
(into the built-in speaker at her mouth)
Mickey. In position.

VOICE (V.O.)
(over walkie-talkie)
First item's under the sink.

Alexandra turns on the tub. Full blast. Noise of RUSHING WATER. Camouflage.

BEDROOM

Lee lies on the chenille-covered bed, thinking to himself.

BATHROOM

Alexandra moves fast. Feels under the sink. Pulls out a portion of rifle. Then, under a free-standing cabinet. Another part. Sits on a chrome stool, still in her underwear, headset in place, putting together a scope-mounted rifle with silencer. Record time. As she thrusts in a magazine --

ALEXANDRA
(into mic, low-voiced)
Assembly completed.

VOICE (V.O.)
Open the window.

Alexandra goes to the window. Gorgeous stained glass. Leaded panels. Ancient. Precious. Looks at the window for an opening --

ALEXANDRA
(frustrated, upset, into the mic)
There's no fucking handle.

BEDROOM

Still lying on the bed, Lee looks toward the bathroom door.

BATHROOM

Alexandra's breathing hard. Nervous wreck.

VOICE (V.O.)
I don't care.

And from the bedroom --

LEE (O.S.)
(calling)
Sweetheart?

ALEXANDRA
(covering her mic;
answering)
Yes?

BEDROOM

Lee sits up a bit --

LEE
Know what I'm thinking about?

ALEXANDRA (O.S.)
(calling)
No.

LEE
When I first saw you... at the store...

BATHROOM

Alexandra looks desperately for something to break the window. Pulls toothbrushes out of a cup on the sink. Looks in medicine cabinet. Glances around the room. Finally, sees a towel, grabs it.

LEE (O.S.)
(calling)
I thought: 'I'll never have anyone like that...'

BEDROOM

Lee lies back down on the bed. Content in his dream world --

LEE
... to share my life with... never.

BATHROOM

Alexandra holds the folded towel up to a pane of rose-colored glass and, with a karate fist to the towel, cracks the window in a silent, split-second hit. Breathing hard now, she looks around. Waits. Tension's unbearable. And in the --

BEDROOM

Lee hasn't moved --

LEE
(to himself)
Lee. Yes? You know what?
What? You're totally ridiculous.

BATHROOM

Alexandra jams the rifle through the hole in the window. Sights into the scope and --

ALEXANDRA
(over the mic)
Okay.

POV THROUGH ALEXANDRA'S TELESCOPIC SIGHT - DUSK

A man moves quickly from a dock, jumping onto a boat. Another power boat, like the one from their afternoon cruise. Driver sits waiting. Sound of ENGINE REVVING.

VOICE (V.O.)
The white boat on the canal.

Two more people move from the dock's doorway. Quick.

VOICE (V.O.)
Take aim on them and get ready.
We're waiting for further orders.

BEDROOM

Lee gets up. Goes to the bathroom door. Gentle knock --

LEE
Claudia?

BATHROOM

Alexandra's still. Taking aim. Ready to kill --

CONTINUED:

ALEXANDRA
(trying hard to cover her tension)
Um-hmm?

BEDROOM

Lee rests his head against the door a moment.

LEE
Can we talk a little?

ALEXANDRA (O.S.)
(calling)
Okay. But stay there.

LEE
I know questions piss you off.

BATHROOM

Alexandra breathes deeply. Holds rifle in the ready.

LEE (O.S.)
(other side of the door)
I don't know what kind of shit you've been through... in your life...

Alexandra starts to cry. The tension's too much. Then, she steadies herself. Still holding the rifle.

BEDROOM

Lee's hesitant. Troubled confrontation.

LEE
... But I have, like you, a pretty good imagination and I imagine the worst. In fact...

BATHROOM

Alexandra's in tears.

LEE (O.S.)
... The worst would be a relief.

BEDROOM

A KNOCK on the door. Takes Lee's attention:

LEE
(calling)
Who is it?

VOICE (O.S.)
(from hallway)
Room service.

Bad timing.

LEE
(going to the door)
Coming.

WAITER pushes his cart in. Well made. Everything Alexandra had ordered.

WAITER
(congenial, subtitled)
Buon giorno. E una bella giornata? (Hello, sir. Beautiful day, isn't it?)

LEE
(seeing the prosciutto)
Wait. I thought... Weren't you out of ham?

WAITER
(confused, subtitled)
Prego? (Sorry?)

LEE
(big tip and)
Never mind. It's okay.

BATHROOM

Alexandra's still, gun resting against the broken window pane. And through the...

TELESCOPIC SIGHT

The dock is momentarily quiet.

ALEXANDRA (O.S.)
(in a whisper)
How many targets?

CONTINUED:

VOICE (V.O.)
One.

ALEXANDRA (O.S.)
(trying to hurry it)
What's he look like?

VOICE (V.O.)
I haven't been informed yet.

BEDROOM

Lee practically closes the door on the Waiter. Trying to get rid of him. Fast.

WAITER
(backing out)
Mi chiamo Roberto, si lei vuole qualque cosa -- (My name's Roberto, if you need anything else --)

LEE
(closing the door)
-- Si, si. Arriverderci, Roma.

BATHROOM

Alexandra starts a cold sweat.

VOICE (V.O.)
Target visible in ten seconds.

TELESCOPIC SIGHT

A second man runs onto the boat. Red cross of the sight follows him.

BEDROOM

Lee moves back to the bathroom door.

THROUGH TELESCOPIC SIGHT

A man and a woman rush onto the boat.

BATHROOM

Alexandra's barely able to hold the rifle:

CONTINUED:

ALEXANDRA
(nerve-racked)
Which one is it?

VOICE (V.O.)
I haven't got that data yet.

BEDROOM

Lee listens at the door. Then:

LEE
Claudia?

BATHROOM

No time left.

ALEXANDRA
The target, damnit!

VOICE (V.O.)
(suddenly)
The woman.

THROUGH TELESCOPIC SIGHT

A woman moves quickly between two men. Also, from the dock to the boat. Sight follows her and --

VOICE (V.O.)
(raising)
The woman in brown.

The woman moves out of the sight.

VOICE (V.O.)
(nervous)
The woman, for chrissakes!

The woman seems to be safe inside the boat and:

VOICE (V.O.)
(almost yelling at
Alexandra to shoot)
The fucking woman!!!

A DOUBLE BLAST. TWO QUIET BLIPS. Perfect shot. Woman doubles over. Always the shock of death.

BATHROOM

Alexandra grabs the headset, yanks it off with the mic and rifle. Flips on the tub again and --

Lee opens the door.

Inside, Alexandra's sitting on the edge of the tub. In her underwear. Sobs melting her eye makeup.

LEE
(angry, confused)
What's going on?

ALEXANDRA
(through her tears)
You promised not to come in.

LEE
I know, but I heard a noise.
(anger building)
I spent fifteen minutes at the door. Did you hear anything I said?

ALEXANDRA
Yes. Everything.

LEE
(relentless)
So, as usual, no answer.

Alexandra remains still. Unable to talk. Looks up at Lee. A search for understanding.

ALEXANDRA
I would love to answer all your questions, but I can't. I have a wound I'm trying to get past and only time can take care of it. If you really love me, give me what I need: time and love... a lot of time... and a lot of love.

LEE
-- Alright.

Lee lays a portion of sandwich on the sink, looks at Alexandra sympathetically, then:

LEE
I believe you.

Lee walks out. An overwhelming sadness. Closes the bathroom door behind him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Alone again, Alexandra breaks down. Pulls the rifle out of the tub. Cleans off a load of soapsuds from the barrel. Rests the gun across her knees. Sobs uncontrollably.

EXT. VENICE, CALIFORNIA RESTAURANT - TWO DAYS LATER

Outdoor rendezvous. Bob reads the paper. Casual. Cool. In the b.g., fractured sounds of CONVERSATION, GLASSWARE, SILVER.

SMALL HEADLINE, PAGE THREE

"Mysterious Woman, Mysterious Murder: Brains Behind Worldwide Money Laundering/Drug Scheme, Gunned Down in Italy. Still No Suspects."

Photo of the woman in brown Alexandra murdered the night before.

BACK TO SCENE

Bob smiles slightly as he reads the article.

AT DISTANCE

Alexandra enters the cafe. A model's swagger. Dressed to be noticed. Movie star look, pissed off, she makes her way to:

BOB'S TABLE

He looks up, momentary shock while he holds her chair. Always gracious.

As Alexandra sits down, a waitress takes her order:

ALEXANDRA
(anger building)
A double cappuccino and a piece of chocolate cake.

Bob gestures toward the Waitress. Doesn't want to order anything, already has coffee in front of him. As soon as the Waitress leaves --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALEXANDRA
(strong, composed)
Venice was awful. As usual, you poisoned your own gift.

Bob doesn't finch, only a slight smile runs across his face.

ALEXANDRA
You know, Bob, I understand what's going on. I know the world is a dangerous place and I know that some of us have to do the shitty jobs. But why am I only okay when it comes to doing the dirty work? Why do you treat me like shit, when supposedly I'm helping you make the world a better place to live in?

Very slowly, Alexandra picks up Bob's cup, leans in a bit and pours cappuccino, all over his lap. Nonchalant. Sets the cup back onto its saucer.

Bob covers the mess discreetly with his napkin.

BOB
(as if nothing had happened)
I'm happy to see you again. I miss the time I had you to myself.

Waitress serves cappuccino and cake to Alexandra. Bob waits for her to leave. Alexandra distractedly plays with a forkful of cake.

ALEXANDRA
(still furious)
Do me a favor. We've known each other, what, three or four years? Now I want five minutes of the real Bob.

Bob watches her a moment, then, as if making a decision:

BOB
(always unpredictable)
What makes you say that? What makes you think that for four years, you had the wrong Bob?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALEXANDRA
Because I find it hard to believe that any human being could be as sadistic as you've been to me. I don't think that's you.

BOB
(smiles as he shakes a cigarette out of his pack)
And where is the real Alexandra?

Grabs the cigarette out of his hand.

ALEXANDRA
(taking a long drag)
That's my dilemma. Am I a dirty person picked to do dirty jobs, or am I a good person who will have to do dirty work all my life, because men like you say so?

Bob doesn't answer. Takes a sip of coffee. Then:

BOB
(uncomfortable, takes a long moment)
I can't answer that kind of question.

ALEXANDRA
(looks at her mentor, then profound and real)
Do you love me? Can you answer that?

BOB
(trying to lighten the passion)
What would you do with a bad man's love?

ALEXANDRA
(doesn't budge from her question)
Do you love me?

Bob's confused, then another long moment and he nods a "yes."

CONTINUED:

ALEXANDRA
(needing to hear it)
Say it.

BOB
Stop it, Alexandra!

ALEXANDRA
(proof for herself)
Say it once in your life.

Doesn't answer her.

ALEXANDRA
Just give me this.

BOB
(more confused)
I can't... not right now...

ALEXANDRA
(a tear moves down her cheek)
Please...

Bob hesitates. Extremely upset. Cornered.

The Waitress returns with Alexandra's cappuccino and chocolate cake. The moment is lost, as the waitress leaves and --

Alexandra wipes away her tear, disappointed, deflated, incredibly sad.

BOB
(opens a file of photos)
There's an ambassador who's been selling secrets. He has a girl friend who owns an art gallery in D.C. He's there now, with her, but he leaves the country next week. Everything's ready to go. All I need is you and a way to get into the girl friend's apartment. The government wants this kept as quiet as possible, because an ambassador's involved. So, no violence, very soft, really cool. And you've got to be absolutely precise. Does this appeal to you?

CONTINUED:

ALEXANDRA
(almost vacant)
Where's the real chance you offered me four years ago?

BOB
(slaps the file shut)
You got the chance of a lifetime, Alex; the chance to live. Don't ever forget it. We're having a meeting tomorrow, so I need your answer right now. You're in or you're... out.

Alexandra shoots Bob a frightened look, handles the file. Flips it back open. Looks down at the Ambassador's picture. Back up at Bob. A challenge and a threat:

ALEXANDRA
Really soft?

BOB
They don't come any softer.

ALEXANDRA
Nothing like Venice. No games.

BOB
(great smile)
No games.

ALEXANDRA
Okay. But it sounds complicated. Like a trap. Who do you want to catch, if it's not me?

BOB
(loves her quickness)
I'll let you know when I can.

Alexandra's thrown off. Stares blankly at Bob as he slides away from the table, nods formally to her and takes off.

AT DISTANCE

Lee watches Bob leave Alexandra's table. He moves off quickly, on foot, sad-faced, toward the cafe's parking lot.

INT. VENICE BUNGALOW - BIT LATER

Alone in her apartment. Alexandra sits quietly looking through the file Bob gave her.

BLACK AND WHITE 8 X 10'S

of the AMBASSADOR, a man in his late fifties, his art dealer/GIRL FRIEND, near Alexandra's age, and a thick BODYGUARD. Grainy. Slightly out-of-focus.

ALEXANDRA

takes a hard drag off a cigarette. Flips open a small notebook. Checks a list. Crosses off an item. Serious work.

INT. KAUFMAN'S OFFICE - WEEK LATER

Bob sits stone-faced with Kaufman. Both cover their fear well. A quiet confrontation. In the b.g., Kaufman's Assistant takes notes from the meeting on a legal pad.

BOB
(watching his boss, carefully)
The government thinks somebody's leaking secrets through an Embassy courier.

KAUFMAN
(always expressionless)
I know.

BOB
I'm hoping to get proof of the latest... 'exchange.'

KAUFMAN
(real caution)
You think it can be done?

BOB
I'm using the best group I've got. If there aren't any problems, I'd like to move tomorrow.

KAUFMAN
Good, but this is very delicate and could cost me my position.

Bob nods his head in agreement.

CONTINUED:

KAUFMAN
Where's the base?

BOB
An apartment near the Embassy.

KAUFMAN
Fine. I'll need to be there to keep an eye on everything. I know the government. Something goes wrong where an ambssador's concerned... I'll have to clean it up right away. I don't want to jeopardize all our work.
(to his Assistant)
Arrange to meet us there.

The Assistant nods, AD LIBBING a "Yes, sir," much more the Kaufman-like bureaucrat than Bob will ever be.

Bob collects his thick report and leaves his boss's office.

INT. VENICE BUNGALOW - BIT LATER

Lee goes through Alexandra's closet. Frenetic. Checks each white uniform. Looks through the pockets. Turns over her shoes. Jiggles them. Nothing. Feels between piles of lingerie, gloves, scarves. Then, a last move. He lifts a nurse's hat. Underneath, nothing. Stares at all the clothes. At once. Moves his hand between two sweaters. Then two more and suddenly feels something. Pulls out an I.D. card. Does a double-take:

ON CARD

is Alexandra's picture, but the name is different, "Ms. M. Haviland." And --

BACK TO SCENE

Door to apartment flies open. Alexandra's home early. Dressed as a nurse. Intact. Perfectly white, except for a tiny black laminate "Claudia" over her heart.

Lee slides the card back between the sweaters and softly closes the closet doors as --

Alexandra grabs him from behind. Bear hug. Wants to play.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALEXANDRA
(notices Lee's mood)
You look a little tired.

Lee sits down, holds out his arm.

LEE
(an idea registers)
I am. Maybe I'm coming down with something. Could you take my blood pressure?

ALEXANDRA
Of course.

Alexandra opens her leather bag. Portable blood pressure machine inside. As she rips the strap from its own velcro:

ALEXANDRA
(cool; expert; wrapping his bicep)
I'm going to D.C. A seminar on radiation techniques in the emergency room.

LEE
(tense)
When?

ALEXANDRA
(pumping the air ball)
Tomorrow.

LEE
(trying to relax)
Where're you staying?

ALEXANDRA
(reading the gauge)
Don't know. Hospitals are always slow. They'll tell me at the last minute.

LEE
(trying to see the gauge; sniffing the air)
How do you smell so good, after working all night in a hospital?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALEXANDRA
(smiling)
It's my secret.
(takes his wrist pulse)
Uh oh. I feel something. Close your eyes.

Worried, Lee closes his eyes. Alexandra lets the air out, watching the meter. Nothing unusual. Then, she kisses him gently, sweetly, on the forehead:

ALEXANDRA
One twenty over eighty. Perfect. Feel better now?

LEE
Yes.

Alexandra wraps up her portable machine.

LEE
But we need to talk.

ALEXANDRA
(light)
Okay. Tomorrow night.

LEE
Promise?

ALEXANDRA
(tension building)
We'll talk about everything tomorrow night. I promise.

Alexandra forces out a big smile.

INT./EXT. D.C. AIRPORT - NEXT DAY

Reflection through the glass doors picks up Alexandra as she strides, straight-faced, solemn, the length of the airport. Sunglasses. Suit. Leather attache. Professional.

EXT. SHERIDAN CIRCLE - SAME TIME

The Ambassador heads down the embassy steps to a waiting limo.

INT. EMBASSY - SAME TIME

Wall of video monitors. Black and white. Jumpy image of --

AMBASSADOR

in a Warhol series. A technician sits in front of the screens. And we MOVE --

BEHIND VIDEO SYSTEM

TO a grouping of electronic cable. Hot-wired. Sophisticated.

FLASH CUT TO:

GROUP OF CABLE

similarly bound together behind --

ROW OF VIDEO MONITORS

inside the --

BASE APARTMENT (NEAR EMBASSY)

One of Bob's Operatives watches out the apartment window with a Zeiss telescopic sight. Doesn't move from his position. And --

OUTSIDE EMBASSY

The Ambassador gets into his limo. The 500 SL makes a fast U underneath the circle of flags, and we FOLLOW it out the marble archway.

INT. BASE APARTMENT - SAME TIME

Bob, Kaufman, Kaufman's Assistant and a COMMUNICATIONS EXPERT sit at a conference table. Special set-up. Cellular phone at the placental center. Cables. Satellite hook-ups. Silence.

EXPERT
(holding his headset with one hand; to everyone)
Ambassador's left the embassy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BOB
(eyeing Kaufman; quietly)
Okay. He's in the car. Any problems, otherwise we'll begin.

KAUFMAN
No. No problems... so far.

BOB
(grabs hold of a cellular phone)
Okay. Let's go.

And as Bob taps out a number --

INT. TRUCK - SAME TIME

Another OPERATIVE picks up a RINGING PHONE. Listens a moment, then AD LIBS an "Okay."

EXT. TRUCK - SAME TIME

"Campo Dei Fiori" is stenciled expertly across both side panels. Same Operative gets out of the truck, carrying an enormous arrangement of flowers. Walks across the street into an elegant apartment bulding.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Antiques spot the corridor. Operative, loaded down with the huge bouquet, knocks on an apartment door.

INSIDE

A woman, the art dealer/Girl friend from the photo, checks the door's peephole.

GIRL FRIEND
(eyeing the flowers)
Yes?

HALLWAY

Messenger fumbles with the load --

MESSENGER (OPERATIVE)
(trying to read his clipboard)
Are you Miss... Charlotte... Romo?

INT. HALLWAY/APARTMENT

Door opens. Bouquet is so huge, the Messenger is partially hidden. Has to squeeze into the apartment sideways. The woman is amazed at the opulence. She turns to lead the Messenger into the living room and --

From behind him, a second operative moves in. Before she can shift her glance, he's wrapped a swath of cotton across her mouth and nose. Struggles a moment, then, her body goes limp. He drags her into --

BATHROOM

Leaving her propped up against a mint green, ceramic Jacuzzi; her feet stretched out in front of her. The operative, white T-shirt, onyx stud in his ear, hip hair-do, moves off into the kitchen area. And we --

CUT BACK TO:

INT. BASE APARTMENT

Bob hangs up. Looks at Kaufman --

BOB
They're inside.

KAUFMAN
Good.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - SAME TIME

Alexandra takes the wrought-iron elevator, stopping one floor below the Girl friend's apartment. The Messenger passes her on the stairwell, still carrying the impressive bouquet as he leaves. Nods discreetly to Alexandra. She catches his glance. Returns it.

She leans a gigantic oil painting on its side. Checks her watch. Catches her breath. Pushes a hand through her hair. Looks down. Hyperventilates. Adrenalin. And --

JUST BELOW

The Ambassador shows up. Takes the same wrought-iron elevator, passing Alexandra, moving to his Girl friend's floor. A bodyguard rides with him. STATIC from his WALKIE-TALKIE. Elevator JOLTS to a STOP. Bodyguard opens the iron doors. And into his walkie-talkie, AD LIBS an "All clear" to the Ambassador's car.

AT CHARLOTTE'S APARTMENT DOOR

Ambassador rings the bell. Waits. Nothing. Rings again. Still nothing. Looks at his bodyguard. Slight pivot at the door. Checks his watch and --

Suddenly Alexandra barges up the stairway, dragging the 6' X 4' canvas. Sunglasses. Long wig. Both men are caught off-guard --

ALEXANDRA
(mumbling to herself)
It's the last time I buy a painting that doesn't fit in an elevator.
(out of breath, goes right into Charlotte's apartment)
Charlotte told me to take care of you. I left her at an antique auction where she's going to go broke or die, bidding on a piece.
(to the Ambassador, holding out her hand)
Claudia.

Alexandra's carefree. Moves without doubt. Great acting. The Ambassador's cautious. Bodyguard checks it out. Watches Alexandra. Paranoid. Ambassador stays in the hall. Unsure. Then, he moves into --

EXT./INT. CHARLOTTE'S APARTMENT

Reluctantly. Looks around a bit. Relaxes slowly. Finally, silently, gestures to his guard to wait in the hall.

INT. APARTMENT

Paintings line the walls. Typical loft space. Lean. Postmodern lines. Ambassador looks at one of the paintings.

ALEXANDRA
(a put down)
Be a hard shell.

Ambassador shifts his gaze to the oil Alexandra brought up the stairs. Leans in to get a closer look --

CONTINUED:

AMBASSADOR
(to Alexandra, still testing)
Who's it by?

ALEXANDRA
(coldly)
A guy who was a pain in the neck even before I carried his stuff. What would you like to drink?

AMBASSADOR
(thinks a moment)
Whiskey.

Alexandra moves through the dining room and into the --

KITCHEN

The Operative drops ice cubes into a glass. Hugs the wall near the refrigerator. Out of sight. Grabs a bottle of velvet-boxed whiskey. Pours. Hands it to Alexandra, who watches the Ambassador from the bar.

IN LIVING ROOM

Ambassador sits on Charlotte's white canvas couch. Still wears his hat and coat.

KITCHEN

Operative knocks out a handful of pills from a plastic bottle.

LIVING ROOM

Ambassador scans the room. Straightens his cuffs. Tries to get comfortable. Instinct.

AMBASSADOR
(calling)
So you work with Annie?

KITCHEN

Alexandra offers the glass. Operative drops the pills into the hi-ball.

ALEXANDRA
Sometimes. Dad's gallery is near hers.

LIVING ROOM

Ambassador looks behind him at a group of paintings. Searching.

AMBASSADOR
Same street?

ALEXANDRA
Yes, a bit farther down, though.

AMBASSADOR
(to himself)
Bit farther... bit farther...

KITCHEN

Operative readies a silencer. Takes it in one hand. Alexandra holds the drink. Expert. Calm. As she moves back into the --

LIVING ROOM

Hands the Ambassador his drink --

AMBASSADOR
Thanks. Ahhh I see.
(finally, feeling relieved)
Just beyond the Finnish gallery --

Just as the Ambassador looks up, the Operative points his silencer right between the Ambassador's eyes --

ALEXANDRA
No. A bit farther.
(as Ambassador starts a sweat)
Elbow up. Drink.
(waits, as he complies, drink in hand)
You know, glug, glug, glug...

Watches the Ambassador finish the glassful. Hands shaking, ice rattling. Stares up at the Operative. Afraid to move.

ALEXANDRA
(a pro)
Lie down. It's time to sleep.

Alexandra takes his glass, as the Ambassador dutifully reclines where he is. Economy of movement. Scared shitless.

APARTMENT HALLWAY - SAME TIME

Ambassador's bodyguard paces. Lights a cigarette. The usual wait.

APARTMENT LOBBY - SAME TIME

Another of the Ambassador's guards waits. Reads the latest copy of Vogue. And --

OUTSIDE

Still another waits in the limo. Drumming his fingers to a LATIN RHYTHM. Singing out loud. And --

A second car pulls up. Two more BODYGUARDS get out. One of them AD LIBS a high-five to the limo DRIVER.

DRIVER
(leaning out the window; subtitled)
What're you doing here?

FIRST BACK-UP (BODYGUARD)
(subtitled)
Sent us as back-up. Ambassador's leaving today, so they're nervous.
(bored with the work)
Did you see that goal Maradonna scored last night?

The second back-up guard joins the First Back-up at the car, while --

The third back-up guard wanders off toward the side entrance of the building.

INT. APARTMENT - SAME TIME

Another OPERATIVE of Bob's, a LOOK-ALIKE Ambassador, flips open a metal attache. Sits on the couch next to the sleeping dignitary. Compares his own glasses to those of the Ambassador. Fiber optic camera inside his. Takes a few test photos. Alexandra watches, slightly intrigued.

Inside the case, elaborate makeup. Operative clips an 8X10 to the top of the case. Photo of the Ambassador. Full face. Begins to clone himself. Same image. Applies a glob of latex to his cheeks. Adds to his hairline. Checks the photo for detail.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Operative flips on the speaker, then punches out a number on the phone.

ALEXANDRA
(antsy)
So what do I do now?

OPERATIVE
(ignoring her, over the phone)
Okay. We're ready. The look-alike's just finishing.

INTERCUT as necessary:

BASE APARTMENT

Bob grabs the phone. Paces the room with it. Stays out of earshot of the others.

BOB
(low tones, hurried)
Fine. The key to the inner safe's always in the Ambassador's left hand pocket... shirt pocket.

INT. APARTMENT - SAME TIME

The Look-alike immediately rolls the Ambassador over. A heavy presence. Reaches into the left pocket. Pulls out a key. Holds it up, almost surprised. A smooth operation. The Operative nods his approval. Look-alike then puts the key into his own left pocket.

Alexandra watches the procedure, getting impatient.

OPERATIVE
(looks over at Alexandra)
Mickey wants to leave. Is that okay?

BOB
Yeah. Call me back just before you take off.

OPERATIVE
(hanging up, to Alexandra)
You can go.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALEXANDRA
Great. How do I get out of here?

OPERATIVE
There's another stairwell.
Through the kitchen door, down the
hall. Take it.

Alexandra nods an "Okay" and moves off through --

KITCHEN

to the back door. Out of habit, she checks the peephole.

INT. HALLWAY

The third back-up bodyguard paces the hall. Blocks the exit.

ALEXANDRA

moves away from the door. Concerned. Strides back into the --

LIVING ROOM

The Look-alike's brushing a light powder layer over his new face.

ALEXANDRA
(trying not to
be nervous)
There's some guy out there in the
hall.

The Operative stares at the Look-alike who moves to the window and --

ON STREET BELOW

The two back-up guards are still talking to the Driver.

INSIDE

The Look-alike flinches. Closes both layers of curtains on the windowed wall.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OPERATIVE
(doesn't like it, and to Alex)
Get in the bathroom and stay there. Give us a few minutes, then we'll let you know what to do.

IN LOBBY

A woman, sixties, walks in, carrying a couple bags of groceries. Waits at the elevator. Guard radios to the first bodyguard upstairs. A warning --

GUARD
(over walkie-talkie)
It's just a housewife with a couple bags of groceries.

HALLWAY

First Bodyguard gets the message, registers AD LIB, flipping off his walkie-talkie. And --

IN BATHROOM

Alexandra sits down on a stool next to the sink. Confused. Uncomfortable. Looks at --

GIRLFRIEND

Groggy. Mouth still taped shut.

ON SCENE

Alexandra lights a cigarette. As the Girlfriend begins to wake up, she looks back at Alexandra. A silent exchange.

BASE APARTMENT - SAME TIME

PHONE RINGS. Bob picks up. Kaufman flips on the speaker.

OPERATIVE (V.O.)
(real nervous)
There are three extra guards. One of them is blocking the back exit. How do we proceed?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BOB
(looks at Kaufman)
Hold on a second.

KAUFMAN
(low-voiced)
That's it. Cancel the operation.

Bob eyeballs Kaufman.

OPERATIVE (V.O.)
(over the speaker)
What do you want us to do?

BOB
(over phone)
Give me a minute to think.

KAUFMAN
(fast, into the speaker)
Cancel it. I'll take the responsibility. I'm sending a cleaner. Don't move until he arrives.

BOB
(furious)
Just because of a few extra thugs?

KAUFMAN
(agitated)
I told you, I don't want any risk to my office.
(to his Assistant)
Send Victor.

BOB
(horrified)
Vic?! Okay... send a cleaner, but not Vic. He's just a killer. For crissakes... he's an idiot. This is my job. We're ahead of schedule. We've got time to try to work it out.

KAUFMAN
(quiet anger, back to Bob and into the speaker)
I'll make that decision. Stop everything right now!

CONTINUED:

BOB
I need some fresh air.

Bob leaves the room. Slams the apartment door so hard, it whacks back open.

INT. GIRL FRIEND'S APARTMENT

Operative hangs up. Glances back up at the Look-alike, who's frozen at a mirror. Look-alike throws a makeup brush into his case. Slams it shut. Pissed off.

OPERATIVE
It's over.

INT. LOBBY ENTRANCE - MINUTES LATER

VICTOR strides in, giant-sized attache in hand. Thick, 30s, overcoat, fedora and dark glasses.

Second Guard looks up from his magazine. A moment. A noise. And --

From behind, Victor's hand reaches in and cracks the Guard's neck. One move. Quiet.

HALLWAY

Sound of the ELEVATOR moving up its shaft. Bodyguard flips on his walkie-talkie.

BODYGUARD
(concerned)
Matt.
(listens a moment, nothing)
Matt. Who's coming up the elevator?!

Still no response. Flips off his walkie-talkie. Pulls a gun and waits for the elevator doors to pop open. Tense.

As the elevator jolts to a stop, a DOUBLE BLAST from a SILENCER and the Bodyguard's dead against the corridor wall.

APARTMENT

Operative and the Look-alike wait. Tension's high.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Sound outside the door from the BODY HITTING THE COMMON WALL. Look-alike starts to panic.

As the Operative opens the door, Victor moves in dragging three Guards by the feet.

VICTOR
(announcing himself)
'Victor. The cleaner.'
(looks around with disdain)
Where's the bathroom?

A path of blood on the white tile floor follows them in.

LOOK-ALIKE
(in terror, pointing to the bathroom)
Over there.

VICTOR
(motioning to the sleeping Ambassador)
Bring that one, too.

INT. BATHROOM

Light spackles off the glass block. Huge Jacuzzi step down. Victor dumps the Guards into the tub, just behind the waking girl friend.

Operative puts down the cellular phone. Helps Victor with the Ambassador. As he's brought in, his girl friend lets out muffled shrieks from under her tape.

VICTOR
(to the girl friend)
Shut up!

As she continues to scream, Victor kicks her haphazardly, knocking her halfway across the room.

Alexandra moves to the toilet. Watches in horror.

OPERATIVE
What about the driver?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VICTOR
(doesn't look up)
In the trunk.
(then, his standard line)
Everything's clean.

ALEXANDRA
And the guy out in the hallway?

Victor looks up at the Operative. Strides out of the bathroom.

LOOK-ALIKE
This guy's nuts!

OPERATIVE
Calm down!

IN KITCHEN

Victor checks the peephole.

IN HALLWAY

The second back-up guard paces the carpeted corridor. And onto the --

ROSE-PATTERNED RUG

A piece of paper mysteriously appears. Out of nowhere.

Guard looks around. Stares at the paper. Moves to pick it up and --

VICTOR

smashes him in the head with the back door.

INT. BATHROOM - SECONDS LATER

Look-alike stares at the pile of bodies. Victor returns, dragging the last back-up guard with one hand and carrying his case with the other.

Pops open his "toolbox." Inside, several industrial-strength bottles of acid. Alexandra moves away from the Jacuzzi, scared.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LOOK-ALIKE
(raw nerves)
Victor? What the fuck are you doing?

VICTOR
(even)
Cleaning up your shit.

He spills the contents of the first bottle over the bodies in the tub. The Ambassador's leg moves. Then, one of his arms twitches. Another leg bobs up.

OPERATIVE
This was supposed to be a quiet operation. Nobody gets hurt.

Victor glares at the Operative a moment, then pulls out a 9mm, SHOOTING him and then the Ambassador. Two fast moves.

LOOK-ALIKE
(losing it)
You're out of your fucking mind!

Continues dousing the bodies with a second bottle.

VICTOR
(snapping open a third bottle of acid)
Help me with this, asshole!

LOOK-ALIKE
I've had it!

VICTOR
Help me.

LOOK-ALIKE
Here! Here!
(tearing off a wig and pieces of his latexed face)
I've had it!!

VICTOR
(to the Look-alike)
Shut the fuck up!

Alexandra watches the breakdown. Inert.

(CONTINUED)

LOOK-ALIKE
(to Victor, hysterical)
Here're the keys! You go to the Embassy!!!

VICTOR
Cut it out!

LOOK-ALIKE
(pulling a mini-Taurus out of his jacket)
Yeah. I'll cut it out!

And, a big BLAST. Hits Victor in the chest. As he goes down, he HITS the Look-alike twice. Once in the forehead and a SECOND POP straight through the neck. Blood spatters everywhere. Look-alike splayed in his own juice.

Alexandra stands stiff, flush with the glass block wall.

Victor fingers his wound. Extracts a little blood. Surprised. Then, gets up slowly and --

Finishes covering the bodies with acid. Pours a last bottle of stuff over the Look-alike. Cellular PHONE RINGS. Confusion covers Vic's face.

Stares at Alexandra. Expectant. Picks up --

VICTOR
Yeah?

INTERCUT as necessary:

EXT. PHONE BOOTH

Across the street from the base apartment.

INT. BOOTH

Bob pivots the circumference. Paranoid.

BOB
What's going on, Vic?

VICTOR
It's clean.

BOB
(afraid of this)
You've killed everyone?

CONTINUED:

VICTOR
(on instinct, looking at Alexandra)
... no.

BOB
Let me talk to the Look-alike.

VICTOR
(scared of Bob)
He's busy.

BOB
I don't care, let me talk to him.

VICTOR
He can't come out now. He's in the bathroom.

EXT. STREET - SAME TIME

Kaufman's Assistant squints up at the late afternoon sun. Glances around.

INT. PHONE BOOTH

At a distance, Bob spots the Assistant, turns around in the cubicle --

BOB
(trying to think fast)
Vic, this is very important. I just spoke to Kaufman. He wanted me to tell you we've changed our plans... and we're going to continue and finish the job... so take the Look-alike to the embassy. Immediately. Secure all the paperwork that's in the Ambassador's safe. Do you understand?

VICTOR
Yeah.

BOB
Do your best to help him. I'll get back to you.

Bob hangs up.

INT. BATHROOM

Deranged, Victor picks Alexandra up off the ground. One hand. Flips open a switchblade with the other --

VICTOR
(knife at her neck)
Do exactly what I tell you, or I'll dissolve your pretty face!!!

Alexandra nods a frightened "okay." Looks around at the aftermath. Gulps air, open-mouthed. Tries to steady herself.

EXT. PHONE BOOTH

Bob takes off down the street. Taps out a cigarette as he goes. Fast. Sits down on a curb, next to a parked car. In view.

Assistant spots him. Jogs over, a bulge at his coat pocket jutting up and down as he sprints up to Bob.

ASSISTANT
(slightly out of breath)
Kaufman wants to see you.

Bob stubs out his cigarette on the sidewalk.

ZEISS TELESCOPIC POV

Of the embassy. Flower gardens line the entrance. And we PULL BACK TO --

INT. BASE APARTMENT

Operative is back at the window. Bob stands just behind him.

KAUFMAN
(to Bob, conciliatory)
Feel better now? Sorry for what happened. Why don't you call. See if it's over. Get everyone back here.

Bob dials Charlotte's apartment. No expression. Waits a moment, then --

CONTINUED:

BOB
(over the phone)
Vic? How is everything?

INT. APARTMENT BATHROOM

Dead bodies overflow the family-sized Jacuzzi. Cellular PHONE RINGS NON-STOP.

BASE APARTMENT

Bob listens, nods his head --

BOB
(pretends a response)
Clean? Okay, I'll call you back in twenty minutes.

Hangs up quickly. Moves to the window, taking the Zeiss sight from his Operative.

KAUFMAN
(still to Bob)
I know it was your job, but I couldn't risk the security of this office. Not for one dirty ambassador. It's not worth it. Things were starting to go wrong. You work on something a long time, you lose your objectivity, Bob. Happens to all of us.

Bob steadies the telescope, smiles slightly as the --

EXT. EMBASSY

Ambassador's Mercedes limo glides into Sheridan Circle. Embassy plates. Guard waves the car in.

BASE APARTMENT

Bob hands the sight back to his Operative. Looks directly at Kaufman, who sips compulsively at a carbonated orange drink.

Three small video monitors pop on. Bob anticipates the surveillance.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BOB
(to everyone, up)
You guys've been here all day.
Let's take a break.
(to the Assistant)
Go ahead.

Looks at Kaufman, who nods his okay to the Assistant. Expert pulls off his headset. Squeezes a cigarette out of a jammed pack. And as everyone leaves --

INT. MERCEDES - SAME TIME

Alexandra pulls on the Look-alike's overcoat. Wears sunglasses. Tucks her hair into Victor's fedora.

VICTOR
I'd better go with you.

ALEXANDRA
(jittery)
No. You'd better not. Stay here.
Give me thirty minutes... and,
Victor...
(looks at Victor)
Stay real calm, okay?

VICTOR
Okay.

ZEISS TELESCOPIC POV

As Alexandra gets out of the car, Victor backs up, out of view of the embassy facade. One silent move.

Alexandra takes the steps, easy gait, as if a daily routine.

MONITOR - ON SCREEN

Alexandra moves into the --

INT. EMBASSY

Vaulted ceilings. Polished travertine. Mosaic, Byzantine terrazzo.

Alexandra walks up the stairway. Passes an employee, who reads as he goes. Gives Alexandra a perfunctory nod.

CONTINUED:

On the second floor, Alexandra stops at a polished, walnut door. Lifts her glasses slightly. Flips through a bunch of keys. Tries several. Quiet. Stops a moment. Listens. Then, continues working each key. Finally, the door opens and --

INSIDE AMBASSADOR'S OFFICE

A French provincial desk. Ash bookcase and a safe.

Alexandra pulls open the safe door.

Riffles her pockets for a moment. Then, finds the Ambassador's tiny, separate key. Works it. And, as an inner door to a small compartment pops open --

IN EMBASSY ROOM

A row of video MONITORS pops ON. Bored surveillance monitor sits at the bank of mini TV screens. Black and white. Fuzzy pictures. Watches the monitors with vague disinterest.

ON SCREEN

Alexandra pulls a portfolio from the safe, hat and coat obscuring any detail.

AMBASSADOR'S OFFICE

Aware the cameras have clicked on, Alexandra keeps her head down. Sits at the immaculate desk. Photographs each piece of paper with her glasses. CLICK of the tiny camera. Otherwise, a scary silence.

OUTSIDE

An embassy guard looks at the Mercedes limo. Curiosity. Walks toward Victor.

Who remains in darkness. Sunglassed in. Blood loss beginning to make a difference.

As the Guard gets to the limo's window, Victor powers it down. Pokes his silencer out. Shoots fast. A silent BLIP and Vic powers the window back up.

BASE APARTMENT - MINUTES LATER

Assistant returns with two Styrofoam cups of coffee. Walks by the monitors. Doesn't pay attention. Hands the second cup of coffee to Kaufman, who types, two-handed, fast, onto a laptop. Sound of ELECTRONIC CLACKING.

Assistant looks absently at the monitors. Then, double-takes it.

ASSISTANT
(slight squat to see)
Hey! Who's the guy in the Ambassador's office?!

Kaufman stops typing. Immediately looks up, pulling a gun on Bob.

KAUFMAN
(to his Assistant)
Cover him.

Assistant puts down his white paper cup. Pulls his own 9 mm parabellum, as he frisks Bob. Very thorough.

Kaufman turns the video monitor toward him. Holds the screen with both hands. Watches it closely, then to Bob:

KAUFMAN
You bastard!

Kaufman moves to the window. Grabs the Zeiss sight.

ZEISS TELESCOPIC POV

of the Mercedes.

BASE APARTMENT

Kaufman's Assistant takes a Colt National Match Goldcup out of Bob's coat. Checks out the semi-automatic gun and, holding Bob at arm's length:

ASSISTANT
What a fucking gun!

Trades up: His own Beretta for the Colt. Tosses the 9 mm on the communications table, holding his captive stiff with the Goldcup. Fascinated by its power.

Kaufman moves back to the monitor. As he watches, he grabs the cellular phone:

CONTINUED:

KAUFMAN
(to his Assistant)
What's the number of the Ambassador's limo?

ASSISTANT
(not moving from Bob's side)
It's in the log.

As Kaufman flips through the computer log:

KAUFMAN
(to Bob, caustic)
Behind my back. What, no confidence in your boss?

BOB
(hands over head, braced against the wall, baleful)
I knew it was you, from the beginning... I felt it, but,
(questioning glance)
I don't understand... why?

KAUFMAN
(fingers the phone, dials fast, with a tiny laugh)
You don't expect me to explain something this complex, do you?

Bob shifts his glance slightly to the Assistant, who fondles Bob's semi automatic.

INT. MERCEDES LIMO

Victor picks up a RINGING PHONE. INTERCUT conversation. On the other end:

KAUFMAN
This is Kaufman, who's speaking?

VICTOR
It's me, boss, Victor.

KAUFMAN
Vic? What're you doing at the embassy?

In the b.g., Bob lets out a slight smile.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VICTOR
Bob told me to finish the job.

KAUFMAN
Okay, where's the look-alike?

VICTOR
Which one?

KAUFMAN
What do you mean, 'which one?'

Silence.

KAUFMAN
(trying to stay calm)
Who's in the embassy? Victor.
Who is in the Ambassador's office?

VICTOR
(his own brand
of dutiful)
The girl.

KAUFMAN
What girl?

Bob registers this. Tenses.

KAUFMAN
Vic, why did you send a girl in
there?

VICTOR
(fragile)
Because the look-alike got sick.

KAUFMAN
(parental)
Victor. Did you kill the look-alike?
Tell me the truth, did you kill him?

VICTOR
(final confession)
Yes.

KAUFMAN
And you sent the girl?

VICTOR
Yes.

KAUFMAN
Who is she?

CONTINUED:

VICTOR
Mickey Mouse.

KAUFMAN
(takes a moment, deep breath)
Okay. Forget it. I'm not angry with you. Now listen to me. This is your new job: Destroy the girl and burn every piece of paper you find. Wherever she is, whatever she tells you, kill her. Understand? Kill her! Kill Mickey, Vic. Repeat it.

VICTOR
(monotone, still that fragility)
Okay. I'll find her and kill her.

KAUFMAN
Is that clear?

VICTOR
Yeah. Clear.

KAUFMAN
Okay. Call me when you're through.

Victor slides the cellular phone into its slot. On the dash, pops open the --

TRUNK

Inside is Victor's bulky attache and the body of the driver. Trussed.

VICTOR

rolls the body out of the way, opens his case and pulls out a cache of arms. Pops silencers onto three. Sound of DOGS BARKING in the distance.

BASE APARTMENT

Kaufman punches the end button on the phone.

KAUFMAN
You almost won. Now I'm going to get two things I've always wanted: Kill this fucking girl and...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Out of nowhere, Kaufman uppercuts Bob. A flashing jab. Blood oozes from Bob's nose.

KAUFMAN
... Punch the shit out of you.

EXT. EMBASSY STEPS - DARKENING

Victor moves up the steps without hesitation, silencers dangling to each side, lost momentarily in the folds of his coat. Sunglasses still hiding his iceman reflection.

INT. EMBASSY - MOMENT LATER

Victor bashes open a first floor door.

INT. OFFICE

Two security trainees lounge informally, uniform coats hang ominously on empty chair backs. They eat paper bag lunches. Complete. Sandwiches and cartons of juice.

Victor aims and fires. TWO BLIPS. Two dead. Potato salad splattering their uniforms.

BASE APARTMENT

Bob dabs at his bloody nose with a handkerchief. Then, suddenly, at ease, nonchalant, his own enormous gun staring at him:

BOB
(to Kaufman)
You forgot one thing. It's the most important rule here...

Bob grabs the barrel of his Colt --

BOB
... The first thing we learn when we start this job...

KAUFMAN
Yeah. What's that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ASSISTANT
(stuggling against Bob's hold on the gun)
What the fuck are you doing?! Don't move!

Confused, the Assistant pulls the trigger. An empty POP. Bob butts the Assistant in the head, knocking him out. Grabs the gun.

Kaufman pulls out his tiny 380. Bob shoots to kill. Split second faster. And as Kaufman slumps dead:

BOB
(to no one in particular)
... Never load the first chamber.

Bob grabs the Assistant, hoisting him to his feet. Spreads him up against a bookcase.

Locks his wrists into industrial handcuffs, as his own operatives come through the closed doors, juggling coffee and donuts.

BOB
(noting their shock)
Sometimes it's hard to see the enemy.

As the operatives drop their cartons of food onto the satellite desk, Bob hands his Colt to one of his men who covers the Assistant. And to the other two:

BOB
(pointing at Alexandra's image)
Watch the monitor and the window.

Bob grabs a phone and hits a few numbers, moving fast.

INT. EMBASSY OFFICE

SECRETARY picks up. Flips on the speaker phone. Routine. An imminent BUZZ, then:

INTERCUT as necessary.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BOB
(intense, over the phone)
I've got to speak with your ambassador.

SECRETARY
(sameness to her voice)
I'm sorry. The Ambassador has left for the day. May I ask who's call --

BOB
-- C.I.A. He's there. I just spoke to him a minute ago. He's in the office right now.

SECRETARY
That's impossible, sir.

BOB
(hot)
Look, this is a matter of life and death. I have to talk to him.

SECRETARY
(efficient, trained)
If you're really from the C.I.A., give me a number and I'll call you back to confirm that.

BOB
(no choice)
Fuck!!! I'm not at C.I.A. headquarters right now. Do you have a fax?

SECRETARY
(also getting pissed off; but with some glee)
Yes. Of course we have a fax. Doesn't everyone?

BOB
Give me the number and watch your fax.

Bob casters over to a fax machine. And at the embassy:

FAX MACHINE - MOMENTS LATER

Bob's face and his I.D. scroll up.

INT. EMBASSY - VICTOR

stands wide-eyed in the center of the rotunda. Gleam of the Travertine and burled burnish. Pivots. Starts up a spiral staircase. Unsure which way to go.

BASE APARTMENT

Bob's a nervous wreck. Waiting on the phone. Poised.

In the b.g., the Assistant stands, outsmarted, attached to a bookshelf. Gun to his head. Silence.

INTERCUT as necessary.

INT. EMBASSY OFFICE

Secretary tears Bob's fax off the machine.

SECRETARY
(different tone)
I'm sorry, sir, but I'm required to check all calls --

BOB
(fast)
It's okay. Thank you.

EXT. CORRIDOR (OUTSIDE SECRETARY'S OFFICE)

Victor moves up to the door. Hears Bob's voice over the speaker and:

SECRETARY (O.S.)
We got a lot of really crazy --

BOB'S OFFICE

BOB
(no more patience)
Put me through, goddamnit! Right now!!!

Frightened, the Secretary pushes a button on her console and --

Victor hits the door with three BLASTS, taking her out with a silent clutch, just as her forefinger lifts off the ambassador's extension.

As the Secretary slumps deep into her swivel chair, she goes for a slow spin and in the:

AMBASSADOR'S OFFICE

PHONE RINGS. Alexandra looks up. Rigid.

EXT. AMBASSADOR'S OFFICE

Victor stands in front of the double doors. Looks them up and down.

BASE APARTMENT

Bob watches Alexandra on the monitor and then to himself:

BOB
(like a prayer)
Pick up the phone!

INT. AMBASSADOR'S OFFICE

PHONE continues RINGING. Finally, on instinct, Alexandra picks up and on the other end:

BOB (V.O.)
Alex!! Get the fuck out of there!!!

And a BLAST to the lock, sends the double doors flying open as:

Alexandra dives out onto the:

EXT. ROMANESQUE LEDGE

and crawls out of sight.

EXT. ROMANESQUE BALCONY

Victor SHOOTS his way to the ledge. Passes the phone's receiver, dangling off its hook. FIRES nonstop. Window sensors pop on, the ALARM system breaking loose.

EXT. EMBASSY FACADE

Guards spread out the length of Sheridan Circle. Guns loaded and cocked in unison. ALARM WAILS continuously.

Alexandra squats at the driver's side of the limo. Opens the door. Quiet. Still hunched, she STARTS the IGNITION. Jumps into the seat as --

CONTINUED:

A guard hears the car and FIRES at her. Pointblank. Alexandra flinches behind the bulletproof windows.

Victor appears at the embassy steps. SHOOTS the guard who's blowing holes in the car and --

Alexandra pulls away, circling for a way out.

Victor takes off after her. On foot. Alexandra drives through an "Employees Only" entrance.

INT. PARKING STRUCTURE - LIMO

SCREECHES around the first tier. Unwieldy. Passes a glass wall. No way out. Drives up to the second level. Still no exit. More glass.

EXT. STRUCTURE - GUARDS

Close in. Begin to circle the enclosure. A pirate's ambush.

EXT. EMBASSY COMPOUND - VICTOR

Moves to the back of the parking lot. Out of sight of the guards. Waits. Silencers drawn. Labored breathing.

INT. STRUCTURE - ALEXANDRA

Makes a third turn. Sees a glass wall in front of her. She stops. Cocks her head. GUNS the ENGINE and takes off through the exit, glass shards flying, hurtling fifteen feet in the air and:

EXT. COMPOUND

Out the back of the embassy. Victor aims his big guns, but as Alexandra flies by, the compound guards SHOOT him gangland style. A bouillon massacre. Victor goes down, strafed and loined.

The guards finally finish firing. Sound of the ALARM wearing thin. Emptiness. Suddenly night. A pyrrhic victory.

BASE APARTMENT

Zeiss sight's retracted from the window.

CONTINUED:

Expert removes his headset, sweating. Bob exchanges a glance with his men:

BOB
I'm going back to the office. Get you some help.

EXT. MERCEDES LIMO - LATER

Wet street. Car's smoking. Rolls to a death's head stop.

INSIDE

Alexandra's wiped out. Bruised and sweat-drenched. Angry. Pulls off her hat and heavy camera-glasses.

D.C. TRAIN STATION - BIT LATER

In the b.g., the reassuring sound of a TRAIN MOVING to a slow stop. Alexandra works a pay phone. Sniffs at the air. Needs the oxygen. Connects and on the other end:

BOB'S OFFICE

His hand resting on the RINGING PHONE. Ready to pick up. Slight smile. Leaves his chin on the receiver.

INTERCUT as necessary:

BOB
Hello?

ALEXANDRA
It's me, Alex.

BOB
(relieved)
Thank God, you're safe.
(then, uncomfortable with the question)
Do you have the memo?

ALEXANDRA
(drugged, shaky exhaustion)
Um hm. Now I know who you wanted to catch.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BOB
(real relief)
Where are you?

ALEXANDRA
(hesitating, pivots in the booth)
I'm not sure.

BOB
(pressing)
Do you want me to pick you up?

ALEXANDRA
Unh uh. When I get too close to you, I get into trouble.

BOB
Okay. I understand, but what do you want to do? Can you meet me? Or... how can we do it? Can I send somebody else...

ALEXANDRA
I'm tired, Bob.

BOB
(misinterpreting)
Oh, you're going to blackmail me, wait a fucking minute. I saved your ass --

ALEXANDRA
(smiling)
-- and I'm going to save yours.

Silence. Alexandra wraps the telephone cord around her forefinger. Lets it slide off. Lets the phone slip to her shoulder. Blots her lips together.

BOB
(internal sigh)
Alright. What do you want?

ALEXANDRA
(steadied anger)
I'm not the little junkie with dirty hair anymore.

BOB
Maybe not. Or, maybe you've just momentarily forgotten her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALEXANDRA
(ignoring the manipulation)
I want a life, Bob. I want out.

BOB
A life? All alone?

ALEXANDRA
(calm)
I'm going as far away as I can. When I get there safely, I'll call you and tell you where the memo is.

Alexandra hangs up. Abrupt.

BOB'S OFFICE

Stuffs the cellular antenna back into its slot. Has to smile.

INT. D.C. HOTEL LOBBY - FEW MINUTES LATER

Staid. Down-stuffed Bergere chairs. Turkish area rugs. Uzi-patterned.

Alexandra stops at the reception counter.

CONCIERGE checks her room's slot.

CONCIERGE
(handing her a plastic card key)
No messages, Ms. Haviland. Good night.

A bloodied finger reaches out for the key. Concierge takes note.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - ALEXANDRA

sits on the closed seat of a toilet. Separate cubicle in a massive bathroom. Exhausted. Beretta on her lap. Checks her watch. Feels something. Touches her forehead with her middle finger. Looks at it. Trickle of blood. Surprises her. Notices the inside of her upper arm. Dark bruise. Then sees her hands caked with dried blood. Tears off a piece of toilet paper. Dabs at her forehead.

SHOWER

Alexandra washes herself. Absently. Leans against the granite stall. Holds the bar of soap against her chest. Blank stare.

Blood-tinted water swirling down the drain. And we...

DISSOLVE TO:

BATHROOM - FEW MINUTES LATER

Steamy. Alexandra towel dries her hair. Looks in a mirror. Still, blood drips from her forehead. Grabs a Kleenex. Holds it to her wound and suddenly, a NOISE from the bedroom. Grabs her gun off the sink ledge and:

INT. BEDROOM - ALEXANDRA

Flips on a light. Bright. Moves to the bed. Rips off the blanket, holding a gun to:

LEE'S HEAD

Dramatic awakening. A new horror covers his sleepy face.

ALEXANDRA

folds the gun back across her mouth. Shock and terror at Lee's fear.

AT BED

Lee looks at Alexandra. Cold disbelief.

ALEXANDRA
(dry)
What are you doing here?

LEE
(nervous wreck, exhausted)
I know everything.

ALEXANDRA
(quick switch)
And what do you think that is?

LEE
I know you've been lying to me... all along --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALEXANDRA
-- I told you what I did, the night we met.

LEE
(hurt laugh)
Um hm, but I didn't believe you.

ALEXANDRA
(low-voiced)
How'd you find me?

LEE
(getting pissed off at the reality of it)
I found your I.D.; the real one or not, I don't know, because I don't know who the fuck you are anymore. But after that it was easy. I spent the entire night calling two hundred hotels in D.C.
(turning sad)
I know uncle Bob is not your uncle.

ALEXANDRA
(cold)
That's true.

LEE
(losing it)
How could you do this to me?

ALEXANDRA
(sincere)
Because I love only you.

LEE
(yelling)
You're a fucking liar!
(lying to himself, cold)
I don't feel anything for you right now. Nothing. I don't even know what I'm doing here.

Alexandra reaches for her gun. Grabs a tight hold, pointing it directly at Lee.

Suddenly scared, Lee sits still in bed. Silenced.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALEXANDRA
(momentarily taking control)
I want to tell you a story.
(through her tears)
It's... long...
(almost just to herself)
I'm sorry. Shit! I'm so sorry.

Alexandra lets the gun drop to her lap. Tears turn into sobs.

LEE
(feeling the pain)
Yeah, me, too. I'm sorry because I spent a week spying on you. I went to your 'hospital'... I felt ridiculous.

ALEXANDRA
(tear-streaked face, smiling)
Why didn't you tell me --

LEE
(sarcastic, but with tears at the edge of his eyes)
Because I really did love only you.

ALEXANDRA
I'll tell you every --

Suddenly, Lee pulls Alexandra to him. Almost rough. Alex drops her gun on an end table.

Sobbing, she lets herself fall on top of him, pushing herself up against Lee's body. She moves over him. Softly. Lee responds. He kisses her face, the back of her neck. Feels her ass. She loses herself in his hands. It's a first and last sex. Overwhelming.

Lee controls it. Moves down Alexandra's body. Unselfish.

She flinches slightly. Almost too much for her. An unforgettable feeling. She holds onto Lee as she moves slightly and as he presses into her, his sadness disappears into the moment.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HOTEL ROOM - SAME NIGHT (LATER)

Lee hugs the sheets in a deep sleep. In a corner of the room, Alexandra sits in a robe. Draws on a cigarette. Stares absently out an enormous window. Huddled in the darkness. Night thoughts.

EXT. VENICE, CALIFORNIA - NEXT DAY

Noon. Beach exteriors. Fast food. Gyros and vintage fashion. The sound of LOW TIDE at an unknown distance.

Unmarked Chevy glides to a stop, as a few early morning pigeons scour the area.

INT./EXT. CAR

Bob squints at the beachy glare, no sleep. Checks his watch. Looks around. Everywhere. Paranoid.

EXT. ALEXANDRA'S BUNGALOW

Door opens slowly, as if caught on a bad hinge. Lee stares at Bob. In control:

LEE
(new strength)
Uncle Bob!
(fingernail taps at his watch)
Right on time. I'm impressed.
(anger building)
Very fucking punctual! She told me, 'He will be there at noon' and...
(checks his watch very dramatically)
here you are!

Waves Bob inside.

Bob moves in cautiously, hand resting on the slight bulge at his coat pocket. Anxious. No control. Follows Lee into the:

DINING ROOM

They both sit, tentatively, at a long, formica table. Ultra modern. Only a leaded glass vase sits between them. Spotless. Empty.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Lee lights a cigarette. Blows his smoke out at Bob, not bothering with amenities. A new, angry Lee.

LEE
Don't you think she's paid enough of a price. Don't you think she merits some peace now?

BOB
(strident)
I agree, but I don't know if you're aware... a few years ago she killed a cop.

LEE
(barely able to contain his rage)
Yeah, I know about that, but how many people has she killed for you. It's okay, when it's for you.
(pulls at his cigarette)
Let her go. You've got the power to do that.

Bob stares at Lee. Unsure. PHONE RINGS suddenly. ANSWERING MACHINE CLICKS ON.

LEE (V.O.)
(on the machine, matter-of-fact)
We're not home. Please leave a message at the tone. Thanks.

BEEP SQUEAL and then:

ALEXANDRA (V.O.)
It's me, Alex.

Lee moves to cut off the call, but Bob's already up. Draws a gun, holding it to Lee's jugular. Flush. Taut.

ALEXANDRA (V.O.)
I hope you're both there. Bob, I gave the memo to Lee.

Lee carefully, slowly, pulls a plastic folder from under the answering machine. Slides it towards Bob.

CONTINUED:

ALEXANDRA (V.O.)
That should be all you need. I'm out of reach. I'm going to stay this way. And, Bob: I know who I am now and I will <u>never</u> forget who I was.
(pause, more static)
I'm sorry, Lee. You never wanted to hear a 'no' and neither did I, but the choice has been made for us. It's a big hit. I love you.
(staticky pause)
Both of you.

MACHINE FLIPS OFF. Bob keeps his gun trained on Lee a moment more, then, slowly flips on the safety and stuffs it into his jacket.

BOB
We're going to miss her.

Lee stares off, absent, alone.

FADE OUT.

<u>THE END</u>

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SCRIPT PROCESSING DEPARTMENT

(818) 954-4632